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Near East & South Asia

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PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Sources Fear FRC-Fatah Fight May Enter Europe

93AF0500A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 11 Apr 93
pp 1, 4

[Text] London—Arab sources in London have expressed fear that the tit-for-tat "liquidation war" now taking place in Lebanon between Fatah and the Abu-Nidal Organization [ANO], also known as the Fatah-Revolutionary Council [FRC], might shift to other places, particularly to Europe and Tunisia, where the PLO has its headquarters.

The sources expressed deep concern over the escalation of "liquidation war," which is coinciding with the resumption of peace negotiations in Washington on 20 April, particularly because the Palestinian delegation will be ready to reach specific agreements with the Israeli delegation concerning the interim period. They said this fear is heightened by the fact that other Palestinian organizations opposed to continuing the bilateral talks have launched an unprecedented campaign against the negotiating delegation since it was announced that Faysal al-Husayni has joined the delegation. They said that this campaign reveals the desire to continue escalating the situation, despite the fact that the inclusion of Faysal al-Husayni, a resident of East Jerusalem, in the Palestinian delegation could be viewed as a positive step.

The sources said that one of the measures the PLO has adopted was to ask some of its leading members to avoid going to Beirut at this time in particular. It also took security precautions to protect PLO officials in the European capitals, and even in Tunis itself. It should be recalled that on 1 April, the ANO assassinated Colonel Husayn Salim, 44, a Fatah official known as Abu-Yunis. This was part of the "liquidation war" between the two organizations following the failure of the contacts to conclude a truce between both sides.

DFLP Reacts to Proposed Delegation Changes

93AF0500B London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 10 Apr 93
p 5

[Text] London—The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] (Nayif Hawatimah's wing) stressed that the U.S. Administration is seeking to "reshuffle" the Palestinian delegation to the peace negotiations with the aim of ensuring a wider and a higher level response to the United States' conditions and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's conditions.

The DFLP statement, which AL-HAYAH received yesterday, said that the U.S. Administration "is continuing to put pressure on the [Palestinian] negotiating delegation and the frontline states in order to return to the negotiating table on 20 April on the basis of the Madrid formula and the U.S.-Israeli deal concerning the question of deportees."

The statement said that the U.S. State Department proposed including Faysal al-Husayni in the delegation to the ninth round of bilateral talks.

The statement described this effort as "an old proposal. The U.S. dialogue with the PLO during 1989-90 aimed at solving the problem of representing Jerusalem in a complicated and roundabout way.... This proposal was also put forward by Rabin when he was foreign minister in Yitzhaq Shamir's Likud-Labor coalition government." The statement said that "the proposal provides that the delegation include a representative who has property and a residence outside Jerusalem, such as Jericho or any other occupied West Bank town."

Continuing, the statement said that at its recent meeting in Tunis the Palestinian leadership "discussed this point," adding that "the PLO can claim that Jerusalem is represented, but Israel says that the new representative is from outside Jerusalem."

The statement called on "the PLO's bureaucratic wing and the negotiating team not succumb to the new U.S. pressures and to boycott the ninth round according to the wish of the great majority of our people both in the occupied homeland and in diaspora."

The statement said "response to Washington's pressures will lead to undermining the [Palestinian] negotiating team's memo to the State Department on 27 January and to further divisiveness in the Palestinian national ranks."

Gaza Losing \$750,000 Daily During Closure

93P50124A Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 7 Mar 93
p 5

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Due to the closure of the Gaza Strip, Muhammad Madukh, one of the most prominent leaders of the Federation of Palestinian Labor Unions, estimated losses in the Gaza labor market alone at \$750,000 per day. In an interview conducted with him in Gaza, he said that nearly 35,000 [workers] go to work behind the "Green Line" every day. Each one of them brings home an average of 60 Israeli shekels per day in wages. This means that they constitute a fixed daily income of 2.1 million shekels (\$750,000) for the Gaza Strip. Madukh asserted that the labor sector is considered the one most harmed by the Gaza closure measure because of its dependence on daily income from labor inside Israel.

Muhammad Madukh, who holds the position of Federation of Palestinian Labor Unions treasurer, described the Israeli measure as tantamount to collective punishment. [passage omitted]

EGYPT

Sudanese, Libyans Settle Permanently in Cairo

93AF0424A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
27 Jan 93 p 15

[Text] Cairo—Sudanese novelist al-Tayyib Salih did not know that his famous novel *Season of Migration to the North* would one day come to epitomize the bitter conditions of many Sudanese who have been compelled by circumstances to migrate northward to Cairo and to reside there unemployed rather than live in the bosom of the homeland.

If Cairo has become a migratory station for about 2 million Sudanese, it has also been the destination of political refugees, e.g. [former Sudanese President] Ja'far al-Numayri and oppositionists (including the imam of a former party and former ministers), and others waiting for permission to return to Sudan or settle permanently in Cairo.

This article examines immigration from Sudan to Egypt. It is based on a quick survey of individuals that make up the map of the Sudanese society that has slowly taken shape in Cairo over the course of many years. The flow of Sudanese into Egypt, particularly Cairo, has been recognized for some time, given that Egypt and Sudan were essentially one state under the Egyptian crown and given the unity of the Nile Valley, a reality imposed by historical, geographical, and ethnic circumstances over the centuries.

However, what is not known is that Sudanese interest in immigrating to Cairo has increased. This interest almost amounts to systematic immigration to live and settle in Egypt, rather than to visit, vacation, or obtain medical treatment, which used to always be the case.

Estimated statistics indicate that more than 2 million Sudanese are in Cairo alone, and a million more are spread throughout Egypt's other governorates.

The increase in the arrival of Sudanese in Cairo began in 1989, following the spread of unemployment in Sudan due to decisions made by the Sudanese Government to lay off most of the college-educated civil service employees in Sudanese executive and legislative agencies, military and scientific organizations, health and diplomatic facilities, etc. Their number now totals close to 600,000 persons. Moreover, new graduates from different universities and colleges are now facing the same policies. In other words, they cannot enter the [civil] service in their specialties until unless they belong to student organizations sympathetic to the regime.

All of those who were laid off and who were graduates with no employment opportunities are thus finding only one door open to them, that of Cairo, the consoler.

Such persons now constitute almost a third of all Sudanese living in Cairo. Some of them prefer to remain in Cairo. Others are using Cairo as a springboard to

another place in the world, but they must wait for at least six months before becoming eligible to obtain a visa to another country from Cairo. Moreover, new procedures are being introduced regarding Sudanese, because Sudan is now accused of exporting terrorism. Visa applicants from Sudan must undergo complicated identity checks.

Another third are merchants who travel between Cairo and Khartoum, or Libya and Sudan, or Syria and Sudan, all of which trade through Egypt. Some Sudanese merchants have joined their Egyptian brothers in the large area in front of the hotels of Ataba [a large square and its surrounding area in northeast Cairo] and 26 July Street, where they lay out some marginal goods on the ground to obtain a meager sum of money to eke out a living and provide their children with a reasonable subsistence level.

There are also Sudanese who have long been accustomed to vacationing in Cairo. When an employee in Sudan becomes eligible to take his annual vacation, the conventional question is, will you spend your vacation in Cairo or Khartoum? Also, large numbers of Sudanese students attend Egyptian universities. The Sudanese Government's decision to suspend their remittances and return them to Sudan has not affected their determination to complete their studies in specialties in which Sudanese universities cannot accommodate them.

Another segment of Sudanese living in Egypt comprises members of the Sudanese emigre community, who have lived in Egypt since the early 20th century, have married, and return to Sudan only to vacation. Most of their children have seen Sudan in only in photographs. They are concentrated in 'Ayn Shams (where there are more than 22,000 Sudanese families, most of whom work in the Egyptian Army) and in 'Abidin and Imbabah, the location of the largest Sudanese market for camels.

Elsewhere in Egypt, the largest Sudanese emigre communities are in Alexandria, where more than 8,500 Sudanese families live.

Most of the Sudanese in Cairo are unemployed and depend on the remittances of their families and friends who work in the Gulf countries, or they subsist by means of the Sudanese tradition of mutual help. In other words, they cooperate together to cover their basic living needs. A very small fraction of them work in commerce as itinerant salesmen or in commercial establishments. A few of them are journalists who work as correspondents for Arab or Sudanese newspapers in Europe or for foreign newspapers. Some Sudanese work in construction. Others work in translation or publishing.

In addition, in Cairo, there are some Sudanese businessmen who have benefitted from the Egyptian Investment Law and have transferred their commercial activity to Egypt. Despite their small number, they have invested more than 20 million Egyptian pounds in projects that have a total capital of 530 million Egyptian pounds.

Statistics indicate that the Sudanese occupy third place among tourists visiting Egypt from the countries of the world, after Libya and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Most of the Sudanese who do not work are politicians, syndicalists, and citizens who are opposed to the Sudanese regime and who were compelled to flee Sudan. Very few of them receive their resources from family members in the Gulf. Most of them subsist by helping each other. A single Sudanese who has an income source or receives financial remittances can rent an apartment and take in three, four, or more persons if necessary, whom he sponsors based on his appreciation of the circumstances that compelled them to immigrate and remain without work in Cairo. Most of the Sudanese in this situation are intellectuals who have good academic qualifications.

Thus, most Sudanese prefer to reside near each other, so that they can easily help each other. For example, you find, living in a single apartment, more than five persons with a combined monthly income of no more than 200 Egyptian pounds. That sum covers transportation, laundry, medical treatment, entertainment, and other expenses. Nonetheless, you find that they are very happy. Such modest sums are used well. They at least suffice to keep them from the evil of begging. For example the Maji Fund has for a long time helped resolve food problems; meat is provided only rarely, and then only through a careful accounting procedure.

Recreation among the Sudanese has a special character. They get together at a friend's house in the evening, where they eat dinner and drink tea nonstop as they discuss politics a great deal and chat a bit about soccer. They exchange jokes and rehash memories of the warm nights of Khartoum until the morning call to prayer. They then part ways and go home, or you find them in the coffeehouses until the wee hours of the morning. The most famous of the coffeehouses and restaurants that they frequent are Wadi al-Nil in al-Tahrir Square, Zuh-rat-al-Bustan in Bab al-Luq, and the cafeteria on Tal'at Harb Street. The most famous place where they congregate is the JJ's Coffeehouse on 26 July Street. This coffeehouse is well known to every Sudanese, even those who have not visited it. It is said that the best way for an arrival from Khartoum to find the address of one of his relatives is to head directly from the airport to JJ's Coffeehouse, where he will find a full answer upon asking.

Onslaught Against the East

In recent years, large numbers of Libyans have flocked to Egypt and settled there permanently. Egyptian sources estimate that they number between about 50,000 and 60,000. They are in addition to the approximately 200,000 Libyan-Egyptian families bound by kinship ties who have lived in both countries for many years. Thus, Libya's largest emigre community in any country is in Egypt. Numerous questions are raised by the ongoing immigration of Libyans to Egypt and [Libyan leader

Mu'ammarr] al-Qadhdhafi's encouragement of Libyans to reside in Egypt. Are there political motives behind Libyans moving to Egypt? Or is it merely that some Libyans wish to live in Egypt?

The Libyan presence in Egypt goes back many years. People of both countries have intermarried and lived in each other's countries. More than 200,000 Libyan and Egyptian families are linked by kinship ties in the Governorate of al-Buhayrah [in the western Delta], the governorates of Upper Egypt, and the northern Egyptian coast. Libyans also go to Egypt to work and engage in commerce. High-level political leaders have also come to Egypt to escape political conditions. Chief among these political leaders are King Idris al-Sanusi; former Libyan Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Bakkush; Libya's prime minister during the monarchy, Mustafa Bin-Halim; and other opponents of the Libyan regime who have lived in Egypt and have been the target of attempts by the Libyan regime to pursue and liquidate them in Egypt, as happened in the late 1970's, when Egyptian security agents thwarted an attempt to assassinate 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Bakkush in Alexandria.

Egypt has always been a destination for Libyans. The number of Libyans living in Egypt has increased to between 50,000 and 60,000. They have gone to Egypt over the years, especially after the Egyptian-Libyan border was opened in 1989, and citizens of each country were permitted to travel to the other with only identity cards. The approximate figure mentioned above is an estimate made by Egyptian sources. Precise statistics are unavailable, because Libyans arrive continuously and return daily through the al-Sallum land crossing point. However, a simple calculation made by the director of the Egyptian Ports Security Agency based on statistics on Libyans arriving and departing through the crossing point shows that: An average of about 20,000 Libyans arrive in Egypt and about 18,000-19,000 leave Egypt each month; the number of Libyans leaving Egypt occasionally exceeds those arriving in Egypt; the number of Libyans coming to Egypt increases during vacations and holidays; most of the Libyans arrive in Egypt to visit, tour, or seek medical treatment; many of them work in commerce.

Some of the primary causes of the increase in Libyans going to Egypt concern the establishment of projects and commercial activities in Egypt under Law No. 56 of 1988, which entitles Arabs and foreigners to own real estate and land in Egypt. The law was promulgated in the framework of the Unified Investment Law, No. 230, of 1989. As a result of this law, Egypt and Libya concluded an agreement under which every Libyan and Egyptian is entitled to own land and real estate in the other's country. This agreement was discussed in the People's Assembly and approved in early 1991. It remains in effect. Under this agreement, Libyans have gone to Egypt by the thousands to live there and acquire buildings and land.

According to Kamal Khalid, a member of the legislative committee in the People's Assembly, the agreement with Libya, which permits Egyptians and Libyans to own agricultural land and real estate in both countries, was presented to the assembly in its first session in early 1991. When it was debated, he was the only assembly member who objected to the agreement, his reason being Libya has no agricultural land like Egypt. At the time, he called for [allowing Libyan] ownership of reclaimable land in both countries for the sake of symmetry.

Kamal Khalid added: "I also said that it is not necessary that we approve this agreement merely because there is a period of goodwill between the Egyptian and Libyan Governments. The result will be that we give our land to the Libyans. However, after a long period of discussions, the agreement obtained the support of a majority in the People's Assembly and went into effect as of the date of its discussion, and it remains in effect. Under this agreement, Libyans have begun to flock to Egypt to purchase land and real estate.

Kamal Khalid discloses that opening the doors wide to large numbers of Libyan immigrants may carry within its fold hidden political objectives.

The immigration of Libyans might be a means of exporting undesirable elements who would seek to undermine the country's stability.

An Egyptian political personality, who prefers to remain anonymous, believes that most of the people immigrating from Libya and settling in the Arab countries, Europe, and the United States are the core of Libya's technical and manual labor force. They represent the overwhelming majority of literate Libyans. They have been settled in these countries for many years.

The source adds: We view the immigration of Libyans with skepticism, because most of those coming to Egypt lack money to invest in Egypt, and they lack capabilities, or experience. A major fear is that this immigration has political purposes and objectives, the intent being to distance these elements from Libya. Hence, these elements might resort to forming fronts of opposition to the Libyan regime in Egypt.

In contrast, Ambassador 'Abd-al-Mun'im Ghanim, a former ambassador in the Foreign Ministry, discounts the notion that political purposes or goals are behind the movement of Libyans to Egypt. He also discounts that these Libyans pose a danger in Egypt to the Libyan regime, or that their way of making a living in Egypt threatens [Egyptians].

To support his contention, he maintains that "a large number of Libyans have always been in Egypt. This is a natural phenomenon based on their strong kinship ties in Egypt. Some of them work in commerce. These Libyans consider themselves Egyptian. We actually find their names and data on them recorded in both Egyptian and Libyan records."

Ambassador Ghanim explained that thousands of Libyan-Egyptian families live in the governorate of al-Buwayrah, in Upper Egypt, and along the northern coast.

They have lived there for many years. They have married Egyptians, and Egyptians have married them. The wife of King Idris al-Sanusi, who took refuge in Egypt after the 1 September Revolution in Libya, is from a family in Upper Egypt. This exemplifies the tie of Libyans to Egypt.

Ambassador Ghanim is doubtful about the fear of Libyans flocking to Egypt, because the real Libyan opposition to the Libyan regime lives in America and Europe, especially in France. Those in Egypt are easily controlled by the Egyptian Government. They are among the largest spenders in Egypt and thus benefit the Egyptian economy.

Dr. Milad Hanna, the former chairman of the housing committee and political secretary in the People's Assembly deals with this issue from an international, political perspective. He said that the world is experiencing many changes. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union and of the power of class affiliation, and the reemergence of ethnic, religious, and tribal identifications, the world is becoming a large village. Barriers will fall between countries. Humanity's international identity will even transcend national identities. Because Egypt, according to Dr. Milad, is the pearl and the heart of the Arab world, it has been a refuge over the ages. Legislation must catch up with these international changes so that Cairo and Alexandria can become a natural refuge—instead of Paris, London, and New York—for the people of the Arab world. He thus advocates that all Arabs be free to own buildings, real estate, and land without restriction, except with respect to customary legal procedures.

Regarding the question of Libyans thronging to Egypt, he said that leaders from every Arab and African country have come to Egypt over the ages, including King Idris al-Sanusi, who fled from Libya following the 1 September Revolution in 1969. He was followed by 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Bakkush and Mustafa Bin-Halim, who was the Libyan prime minister during the monarchy. The latter's wife was born in Alexandria, and he himself is of Palestinian origin, having graduated from Alexandria University. Throughout many previous years, millions of brothers from Sudan and thousands of Libyans, including political leaders opposed to the regimes in their countries, have come to Egypt. They acknowledge Egyptian hospitality. Hence, Cairo will become like London in the last century and early part of this century, a refuge of opposition movements, each one of them calling for democracy, human freedoms, human rights, and minority freedoms. This is the character of the coming age. Therefore, there is no harm in the presence of Libyan residents in Egypt, as long as they do not overstep the limits.

Controls on the Immigration of Libyans

Major General Nabawi Isma'il, a former Egyptian interior minister, stresses that the Egyptian people can absorb any social, regional, or local phenomena, and that it cannot itself dissolve in such phenomenon. To confirm the veracity of his statement, he cited the example of the large number of Soviet experts who came to Aswan in the 1950's to build the High Dam. The people of Aswan were not influenced intellectually or socially by these experts. Therefore, any immigrant or person of any nationality coming to Egypt cannot affect Egypt. Rather, the opposite may occur. Egypt is open to all nationalities, except terrorist elements that threaten the country's security. Egypt's security agencies are of an outstanding caliber. They can distinguish between political immigration and immigration with the intent to reside. They are able to uncover the objective of any person coming to Egypt before it is too late.

Therefore, according to Maj. Gen. Nabawi Isma'il, the problem of Libyans flocking to Egypt must be viewed from a vantage point removed from politics. Libya's entire population numbers no more than 3 million. This means that if some of them come, they would certainly not exceed several thousand. It is easy to ascertain their identity, discover the purpose of their presence in Egypt, and control them. This is not to deny that there are individuals among them who might immigrate to and reside in Egypt for political purposes. Even collective immigration for political purposes would not at all mean that such individuals would succeed in achieving their goals. Rather, in most cases, these goals are achieved within restricted, individual limits.

Strategist Praises Damascus Declaration

93AF0439A Kuwait AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM in Arabic
28 Feb 93 p 9

[Article by 'Abd-al-Sattar al-'Azzazi: "Egyptian Strategist Major General Zakariya Husayn Analyzes Egyptian Security Policy After Gulf War"]

[Text] The Gulf region is of special interest to Egyptian policy, as reflected in the special relations that link Egypt and the countries of the region. In light of recent international changes, Egyptian policy has had to adapt to changes in the world, and the components of this policy in all its economic and military dimensions are being reordered.

Major General Zakariya Husayn Ahmad, an expert on strategy and former head of Nasir Higher Military Academy, has assumed the task of adapting Egyptian defense policy in the 1990's to changes in the new international system. His effort has been appreciated by all political and academic circles, and he has earned a doctorate in strategy and national security for it.

How have the changes affected the map of Egyptian political and defense interests? Where does the Gulf

region rank in the priorities of this policy? Does the Gulf enter into the scope of Egyptian national security?

These and other questions were discussed in an interview with Dr. Zakariya Husayn.

I first asked the major general how recent international changes had affected Egyptian defense policy.

[Husayn] Egyptian defense policy is based on not waiting within Egypt's borders. A country with no extension into its regional environment has no weight in the international environment. Effectiveness and respect at the regional level are prerequisites for an effective role at the international level. Lest its role be marginalized, and in the wake of the isolation that it experienced following the signing of the Camp David agreement, Egypt began to produce an active defense policy that went beyond the context of the nation state. It opened up to the Arab world in the context of joint cooperation to maintain each side's interest without interference in each others' affairs. Such an approach affects not only military policy but also various other aspects of relations. Egypt's defense policy is based on protecting and securing the country's borders from threats by neighboring countries and on military cooperation with the Arab countries in the interest of Arab national security.

[Azzazi] How has this military policy affected relations with the Gulf region?

[Husayn] Egypt's position on the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was one of the most prominent landmarks of Egyptian defense policy, which is based on respecting the independence and freedom of every Arab country and not interfering in its internal affairs. That is why Egypt participated militarily in the war to liberate Kuwait. This followed formulation of the Damascus declaration, representing a new two-fold Gulf security philosophy: Egypt and Syria will be responsible for military security, and the Gulf states will underwrite economic security for Egypt and Syria. The declaration still remains in effect, despite all that has been said about obstacles confronting it. It is the best formula that has been reached. It does not prevent the Gulf countries from signing security agreements with friendly countries, since decision making must belong to the countries of the region themselves.

[Azzazi] Where does Gulf security lie in the context of Egyptian national security?

[Husayn] The importance of the Gulf region to Egypt transcends the question of the region's oil reserves or the total number of Egyptian workers there. Geographical realities dictate mutual linkage between the Red Sea and Gulf regions. We must remember that the recent American bombing of Iraq or the bombing during the war to liberate Kuwait originated partly from ships and fleets on the Red Sea. Thus, protecting the Red Sea as an important naval passage linking the Gulf region to Europe and the Americas is a vital industrial matter. Most importantly, one of the Gulf countries, Saudi Arabia, faces the shores of this sea and has the longest

coastline on it. The relation between Gulf security and Egyptian security is therefore organic: a threat to either side will inevitably extend to the other.

[Azzazi] Given the organic relationship between Egyptian and Gulf security, how do you think the present tension in the Gulf, after the renewed confrontation between Iraq and the United States, will affect Egyptian defense policy? What will be the future of stability in the region?

[Husayn] Stability in the Gulf region certainly is high on the scale of Egyptian political and defense priorities. Egypt contributed the largest Arab fighting force to the war to liberate Kuwait. [It did so] out of a belief in the connection between Egypt's security and the security of the Gulf.

As for the future security of the Gulf, judging from previous experiences, I can say that trilateral cooperation between Egypt, Syria, and Saudi Arabia is certain to guarantee the stability of the region. This trilateral cooperation led the preparations for the war ever since the Khartoum summit that followed the 1967 defeat. History teaches that Egyptian-Syrian-Saudi agreement is guaranteed to secure the entire Arab region against any threats. We must not forget that this agreement and alliance were what confronted Iraq when it invaded Kuwait.

[Azzazi] But where do the Arab states come in?

[Husayn] I am not talking so much about three countries as I am talking about three forces—meaning that Egypt represents one complex of forces, Saudi Arabia another complex, and Syria another. As a result, the matter is apart from alignments. The only option for establishing balance and stability in the Gulf region is through this triangle. Cooperation by the sides of this triangle has accompanied all stages of revival, solidarity, and victory in Arab history, whether in overcoming the effects of the June 1967 defeat, the October war, or the war to liberate Kuwait.

[Azzazi] Since the days of imperialism, some foreign circles have seen the relation between Egypt and the Gulf as merely naval, in the sense that control of either of the two regions necessitates controlling the other, as happened under the British empire. How do you explain the restriction of the security relationship to geographic considerations?

[Husayn] We do not deny the fact that Egypt and the Gulf are linked for geographical considerations, but we deny that this consideration is the only one. Geography alone does not produce joint security. Israel, for example, is Egypt's neighbor, but it still represents the prime threat to Egypt's security. The connection to the Gulf transcends geographic considerations to involve considerations of joint interests and a single destiny. This common destiny or these interests do not make it wrong to adduce geographic facts that contribute to these

interests, nor should one take exception with the proposition that the Red Sea and Suez Canal are the security of the Gulf countries.

Extremists Determine To Implement Their Plans

93AF0481A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
13 Mar 93 p 4

[Article by Sawsan Abu-Husayn]

[Text] Cairo—In response to questions by AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT put to extremist figures behind bars in the Supreme Military Court, they said that their plans have not yet been completed despite the series of political assassinations they carried out in Egypt since the assassination of late President Anwar al-Sadat in 1981.

The extremists, whose case, in which 49 persons, including 6 who absconded, is being tried by the court, stressed that they are determined to go ahead with implementing their plans. A defendant named Hisham 'Abd-al-Dhahir, who is an engineer, said in response to a question by AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT regarding whether he belongs to al-Jihad Organization: "Yes, I have the honor of defending my country through my voluntary work." He denied that his group is involved in terrorism, saying: "We do not know about the terrorism of which we are accused by the Egyptian media."

Asked about the charge against him, he said: "I am accused of having distributed leaflets that called for changing the government and taking part in attacking tourists. In fact, these are not accusations as much as they are medals that have been awarded to me because I believe in my mission, which is to impose God's laws and change the ruling regime."

Regarding the group's refusal to have dialogue with the government, Hisham said: "The regime refuses to listen or to engage in dialogue, except with itself. We reject this, even if the punishment is execution. We are ready to protect Islam with our souls and blood."

When told that the actions they are carrying out are quite far from the spirit of Islam, he said: "Let us see any Muslim who believes in God's laws condemn what we are doing. We are liberating Islam from enslavement, injustice, and tyranny."

[Abu-Husayn] From whom do you get your instructions and guidance?

[Abd-al-Dhahir] From the supreme commander, Dr. 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman.

[Abu-Husayn] How do you finance the sabotage operations you carry out?

[Abd-al-Dhahir] God is the giver, and the Muslims' property belongs to Islam.

[Abu-Husayn] Do you receive any financial backing from Iran?

[Abd-al-Dhahir] I will not answer this question.

Another defendant, Mustafa Husayn 'Abd-al-'Al, a lawyer, is, according to military prosecution charges, accused of holding press conferences, contacting news agencies, and preparing and distributing leaflets to the media that called for changing the ruling regime.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT asked him about his opinion of the charges against him.

[Abd-al-'Al] Yes, I did this in order to cleanse the regime. This is a legitimate action and absolutely not contrary to Islam. Indeed, Islam confirms it and calls upon us to act.

[Abu-Husayn] Are you aware of the risks you are taking?

[Abd-al-'Al] The risk I would be taking would be to continue to support the ruling regime. Rule is for God alone. Also, as a lawyer, I reject referring us to the Military Court, and I see no justification for this shameful decision that our enemy has imposed on us. This decision should be rectified so that our trial will take place in a civilian court, particularly because we are civilians and do not belong to the military establishment. Therefore, we believe that the [government's] objective is to resort to the method of physical liquidation of those who believe in God's laws.

[Abu-Husayn] You are harming your country's interests, especially with regard to tourism. What do you say to that?

[Abd-al-'Al] Why does the ruling regime insist that the main source of income for the Egyptian economy is tourism? There are many other sources, and Egypt's income from tourism does not exceed 2 percent. Whoever does not believe me can refer to the statistics in international reports on this subject.

[Abu-Husayn] Why don't you use dialogue instead of terrorism?

[Abd-al-'Al] First, we are not terrorists; we are Islamists. Second, we daily and publicly proclaim that the [Islamic] group is ready to enter into dialogue with the regime and with its ulema, but this is subject to certain conditions, including releasing all those detained in Egyptian jails; broadcasting the dialogue live, particularly on television; precluding the Ministry of Interior from interfering with the dialogue; setting up an impartial body of ulema in order to rule on the conflict between us and the regime; and ensuring the Egyptian Government's commitment to the outcome of the dialogue.

[Abu-Husayn] Does the Islamic group intend to reach power, in which case the conflict will end?

[Abd-al-'Al] Why not? Should this happen, it would reform many things in our country. [end 'Abd-al-'Al]

The families of the accused inside the military courtroom were surprised by the charges against their children.

Al-Haj Makkawi Husayn, who has a bachelor's degree in commerce [as published], said that his son would not kill an ant. He was already in jail when the tourist bus was hit, the action of which he is accused. How could he have taken part in this operation while he was in jail? AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT asked the father if he knew that his son has been accused of joining al-Jihad Organization. The father said he had no knowledge of this. "I financed his education and got nothing back," he said. "I am now 70 years old, and I need someone to look after me. Unfortunately, this is the limit of my patience and my efforts for the sake of my son, who has become accustomed to entering detention since he was a second-year student in the college of commerce at al-Fayyum."

Decrease in Foreign Employment Projected

93AF0439C London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
5 Feb 93 p 4

[Article: "Egypt in Process of Reducing Foreign Work Force by 10 Percent a Year"]

[Text] Egypt's minister of manpower, 'Asim 'Abd-al-Haq, said that his government is committed to reducing the size of the foreign work force in Egypt, 28,000 workers, by 10 percent a year. He specifically targeted Asian workers as needing replacement by Egyptian workers.

'Abd-al-Haqq noted that the areas in which foreigners work in Egypt are limited to national projects such as sewers, water, electricity, oil, and tourism, these being "the fields in which we require some foreign expertise." In his special statements to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, the minister of manpower singled out Asian workers as the only competition to Egyptian workers in the Gulf region. In his words, "These workers must be confronted with a generation of Egyptian workers with high technical and training competence." He noted that revenues of Egyptians working overseas amounted to 5 billion pounds in 1991.

The minister of manpower explained that his government is granting priority to labor-intensive projects to employ new graduates because it is necessary to provide no fewer than 400,000 jobs a year. This represents 20 percent of the annual 35 percent increment that represents replacement and renewal of the work force. He noted that the size of the labor market is 450,000 jobs a year.

'Abd-al-Haq criticized the multiplicity of agencies overseeing worker training. There are 498 training sites that belong to 18 ministries, 15 organizations, and 26 governorates. All of the equipment and tools at these training centers must be improved to keep pace with modern

technology. Factories must train vocational-school students to qualify them for work. He called for passage of legislation to unify training supervision.

He added that the Ministry of Manpower has prepared a new youth conversion training project aimed at giving young holders of higher, intermediate, and beyond intermediate education certificates, as well as drop-outs of various educational levels, skills, and knowledge, to help them establish small productive enterprises and train them to operate and manage them.

Merchants Face Threat of Bankruptcy

93AF0439B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
29 Jan 93 p 4

[Article: "Fears That Phenomenon of Bankruptcies Will Worsen in Egypt: 300,000 Merchants Declare Insolvency in 1992"]

[Text] Cairo—Egypt saw a doubling of the number of cases of bankruptcy and insolvency in the commercial sector last year, resulting in the highest level ever as a direct result of economic stagnation.

The number of cases of inability to pay obligations rose to 300,000, meaning that 300,000 merchants face loss of commercial reputation or imprisonment. The national economy will suffer huge losses directly or indirectly.

What are the reasons behind the increase in cases of bankruptcy? Are there ways to stop or decrease the phenomenon?

The Federation of Egyptian Chambers of Commerce states that the number of cases of insolvency (a prelude to declaring bankruptcy) among merchants and companies has reached dangerous levels (about 23,000 cases a month) in all of the governorates of Egypt as a direct result of the stagnation that grips the market.

Experts indicate that the worsening of this phenomenon results from, among other factors, the spread of stagflation (stagnation accompanied by inflation). Stagnation means economic slowdown, increased unemployment, accumulation of goods, and a tendency for prices to decrease, sometimes below the level of cost—and thus the merchant's inability to pay obligations that fall due.

Other experts, however, have minimized the importance of the phenomenon on the ground that bankruptcies are a normal phenomenon in a free market economy that operates on the principle of the survival of the fittest in terms of ability and level of quality.

The latter note that most Egyptian domestic production used to take place under government protection from foreign competition. Tariffs were imposed, and the importation of some goods was prohibited. As a result, individual enterprises and companies with high costs and low productivity proliferated. Opening the door to the importation of some commodities has exposed domestic producers to difficulties in marketing their

production. Furthermore, setting credit ceilings to limit borrowing from banks and reduced bank funding operations for some projects have kept some individuals and enterprises from obtaining the cash needed to fund their activities. They have become threatened with insolvency or bankruptcy.

In addition, the application of the sales tax, which has added large burdens for owners of enterprises, has led to a rise in the prices of some goods at a time when demand for them has decreased. This has had a negative effect on an important sector of enterprises, particularly small, labor-intensive trades.

Value of Claims Decreases

Mustafa Zaki, general secretary of the Federation of Egyptian Chambers of Commerce, thinks that the increased number of cases of insolvency should not cause alarm because of the sharp decrease in the total monetary value of claims on those unable to pay. In 1986, the actual total value of claims on those unable to pay amounted to 814 million pounds. In 1987, the value dropped to 702 million pounds; in 1990, to 260 million pounds, and last year, it reached 143 million pounds. Zaki attributed the drop in the total value of claims primarily to strictness by banks in granting loans and credits and to their careful investigations of customers' and merchants' financial conditions to assure their ability to repay.

Mustafa Zaki noted the need to distinguish between insolvency and bankruptcy. While there were 300,000 cases of insolvency in 1992, there were only 10 cases of bankruptcy. It is not in a creditor's interest for a debtor to declare bankruptcy, because this may mean that he will not recover any of his claims on the debtor as a result of the latter's inability to pay.

Mustafa Zaki added that the phenomenon of insolvency increased greatly in 1991 and 1992, although its presence goes back a number of years, specifically to the beginning of steps to reform the economy. These steps were accompanied by social effects such as a decrease in wages. During the 1980's, these steps constituted the reason for about 27 percent of cases of insolvency, and they were the cause of more than 50 percent of the cases in 1991 and 1992. As for the distribution of cases of insolvency, Mustafa Zaki says that most of them, in terms of value and, to some extent, in number, lie in the commercial sector. In 1986, for example, the total value of claims amounted to 822 million pounds: The share of civil cases (192,000 in number) amounted to 110 million pounds, while the share of commercial cases (239,000 in number) amounted to 718 million pounds. In 1987, there were 235,000 commercial cases and 175,000 civil cases.

Industry Hurt Most

While economists list high interest rates on loans as one of the main reasons for the rise in cases of insolvency, Mahir Hamdun, overseer of credit at Delta International Bank affirmed that the increase in interest rates on loans

has not been so great as to threaten merchants and customers with bankruptcy. In most banks, the increase has been no more than one percentage point. The actual effect of higher interest rates has been limited to a decrease in the volume of demand for bank credit.

Nevertheless, Hamdun noted that industrial enterprises have been among the most affected by the rise in bank interest rates and that this has affected the price of their products. This is because in such enterprises the capital cycle is long and investment costs are high. They need long periods to repay their loans; therefore, interest burdens on them are multiplied. In addition, industrial enterprises lack the advantage of obtaining credit facilities at interest rates 5 percent below the rate on the loans of the enterprises.

Economic Stagnation

Economists note that the reform measures, which included imposition of a sales tax and increased prices for basic goods and services, as well as efforts to combat inflationary pressures by tightening restrictions on loans (increasing interest rates), helped exacerbate the country's economic contraction.

Not only do high interest rates reduce new investments and resources for new job creation to strengthen consumer spending, they lead to such increased debt burdens for companies that some of them are exposed to insolvency or bankruptcy. Dr. 'Ali Hafiz, professor of economics at Cairo University, said that an end to this phenomenon will require the government to take a number of steps, including moving gradually in applying privatization programs, considering the economic effects of monetary policies, and lifting restrictions that sometimes put enterprises in danger of bankruptcy. Hafiz also calls on official agencies, such as chambers of commerce, the Statistics and Development Agency, and the Ministry of Manpower, to prepare studies of market trends and needs and publish them regularly so that entrepreneurs do not become involved in creating and establishing unsuccessful projects.

There must be interest in vocational training in an attempt to move those with skills and trades suffering from stagnation into other skills and trades that are prospering, thereby removing the threat of bankruptcy from them. The Fund for Social Development should help owners of enterprises threatened with bankruptcy. It should extend them credit on easy terms or aid them with expertise or in other ways.

Other steps in this area include alleviating tax burdens, which have become an obstacle to many enterprises. The sales tax, for example, has led to higher costs for goods and services and has lowered individual purchasing power, thereby increasing the severity of the downturn.

Muslim Brotherhood Supreme Guide Interviewed

93AF0456A Cairo AL-SIYASI AL-MISRI in Arabic
24 Jan 93 p 3

[Interview with Shaykh Muhammad Hamid Abu-al-Nasr, supreme guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, by 'Adil Qindil and Ahmad 'Abd-al-Hakam; place and date not given: "Heated Interview with Supreme Guide of Muslim Brotherhood"]

[Text] In a heated, wide-ranging AL-SIYASI AL-MISRI interview, Shaykh Muhammad Hamid Abu-al-Nasir, the supreme guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, said that the Brotherhood does not accept the Islamic Group's [Jama'at Islamiyah] idea that there are no parties in Islam. He implied that the need to establish a Muslim Brotherhood Islamic party that does not distinguish between religion and politics has become pressing and necessary. At the same time, he welcomed the establishment of parties for the Copts and other religious communities, stating that these would not conflict with national unity and social peace.

Replying to a letter to the Brotherhood from the Marxist thinker Mahmud Amin al-'Alim, who said that there are no politics in religion and that one cannot work with everybody who believes in God, the supreme guide said that governments that denied the existence of God have failed and been wiped out of existence, as proved by what has happened to international communism, which has departed never to return.

As for the Brotherhood's relations with groups that charge society with unbelief and commit terrorist crimes against citizens and tourists, the supreme guide of the Muslim Brotherhood denied that any relationship or organic link between the Brotherhood and such groups existed. He stressed that the Brotherhood rejects and deplores all acts of violence and terrorism in society, whatever their source or whoever commits them.

As for future relations between the Brotherhood and the regime, Shaykh Muhammad Hamid Abu-al-Nasr stated that the Brotherhood will support the current regime as long as it carries out the mission of benefiting the people.

[AL-SIYASI AL-MISRI] Fifteen years after the return of a multiparty system in Egypt, how do you assess party activity and democracy? Have they achieved their desired goals?

[Abu-al-Nasr] A multiparty system is desirable in modern times because the presentation of ideas of various sorts and orientations brings out many ideas that are useful and beneficial to the country. Democracy in Egypt has certainly been very profitable, though in a limited way. Only men of the ruling party or those who are approved enjoy it.

Brief Slogans

[AL-SIYASI AL-MISRI] What do you think of the charge that the Brotherhood has contented itself with

brief slogans such as "Islam is the solution," in order to appeal to mass religious feeling without presenting any detailed solutions or programs for social problems and issues?

[Abu-al-Nasr] In fact, not recognizing the legal existence of the Muslim Brotherhood has deprived the Brotherhood of the ability to explain the ideas and views it hopes to realize. The Brotherhood has no building in which to hold panels or convene conferences. It also lacks a press and writers of all sorts. When these obstacles cease, the Brotherhood will be able to explain its ideas for all to hear and discuss. The slogans to which you referred are phrases compressed due to existing circumstances. Nevertheless, there are specialists in the Brotherhood who devote themselves to studying the details, and the Brotherhood presented some details in the last People's Assembly.

Brotherhood Party

[AL-SIYASI AL-MISRI] You have announced on several occasions that you will apply to found a new party in the name of the Brotherhood; yet that has not happened. Why? Will you take new steps to provide a legal channel through which you can carry on your activity, which is now prohibited by law?

[Abu-al-Nasr] Certainly the need to create a Muslim Brotherhood party has become pressing. What stands in the way is the existence of the committee on parties, which is dominated by the ruling party, which rejects the principles of the Muslim Brotherhood and the Brotherhood's presence on the scene. We have a court case that has not yet been decided. We are waiting for the court's decision to consider how best to proceed.

National Unity

[AL-SIYASI AL-MISRI] Some think that approval of your application to establish a religious party will lead the Copts and Jews also to request the establishment of parties for them. Do you approve of the existence of parties for non-Islamic religious communities? What do you think of the legal provision against religious or class parties in order to preserve national unity and social peace?

[Abu-al-Nasr] The party that the Brotherhood seeks is an Islamic party in the sense that it will not distinguish between religion and politics. As for other ideas, that what belongs to God is God's, and what belongs to Caesar is Caesar's—that is what Islam, which embraces all sides of life, rejects. All the same, we do not oppose; nay, we welcome the existence of other parties for our brothers the Copts and others. This does not conflict with the national unity that everybody desires.

Islam Does Not Forbid Parties

[AL-SIYASI AL-MISRI] How can you ask to establish a political party when some Muslim Brothers and some members of the Islamic groups hold that there are no

parties in Islam—that the very idea of a multiparty system is innovation, and every innovation is misguidance, and every misguidance leads to hellfire!

[Abu-al-Nasr] The Muslim Brotherhood does not hold such an idea. The early and recent history of the group attests to its participation in elections, involvement in political activity, and participation with sincere party men to advance the country by all means that do not conflict with Islamic belief.

Communism Has Failed

[AL-SIYASI AL-MISRI] What do you think of the Marxist thinker Mahmud Amin al-'Alim's reply to Judge Ma'mun al-Hudaybi—that there should be no religion in politics and no politics in religion, and that one cannot work with everybody who believes in God, as shown by the fact that Zionists and leaders of imperialist countries believe in God and nevertheless have enslaved and colonized other peoples to realize their evil schemes?

[Abu-al-Nasr] When religious people fail in governing, their failure is not due to religious belief. Religion is not responsible for all that depreciates humanity; rather, those in authority who govern lose the way and act according to their personal whims and purposes. One can say emphatically that governments that deny the existence of God have failed and been wiped out of existence because of their hatred for the way of God and His great teachings. The proof is what has happened to international communism. It has departed and, God willing, will never return. Its ideology corrupted all things and dried the springs of mercy and justice in the hearts of its adherents and proponents, so that injustice and tyranny became its religion and highest goal.

Brotherhood Dictatorship

[AL-SIYASI AL-MISRI] The Brotherhood is accused of dictatorship and opposition to a multiparty system. It is accused of dividing society into two parties—God's party and Satan's party—so that anyone who opposes its view becomes a member of Satan's party.

[Abu-al-Nasr] The Muslim Brotherhood does not make such a division, which elevates one opinion over another without justification. The Brothers welcome those who disagree with them in opinion and religion in order to arrive at the truth, justice, and freedom.

Shura, Allegiance System

[AL-SIYASI AL-MISRI] You have called for shura [Islamic consultation] as a basic component of the Islamic state. However, you have not practiced it in the group's internal system, where allegiance was sworn to you on the basis of age, not worthiness. Furthermore, isn't the group's system of allegiance based on obedience and carrying out your commands?

[Abu-al-Nasr] I was nominated as supreme guide by the Office of Guidance, and my nomination was submitted

to the Constituent Board, which approved it. All these steps took place in accordance with the group's rules and laws.

As for consultation, it is the rule in the group's institutions. Obedience is required when it does not involve disobeying God. It is obedience to the group's statutes and orders that the supreme guide of the Muslim Brotherhood implements and from which he does not swerve.

We Support the Regime Conditionally

[AL-SIYASI AL-MISRI] How do you view future relations between the Brotherhood and the present regime in light of current conditions and changes? Why, though the Prophet coordinated with the Jews in one of his battles, do you reject coordination or dialogue with those whom you have described as atheistic and Marxist currents—though the Prophet never avoided dialogue with Muslims and non-Muslims in worldly or religious matters?

[Abu-al-Nasr] As Muslim Brothers, we support the present regime as long as it carries out the mission of benefiting the people. If we object to its orders and do not support them, we do so only for the sake of justice and fairness, with a view to the welfare of the people and the spirit of Islam. We hold dialogue with all ideas with patience and broadmindedness; and if the proponents are people who possess revealed scriptures [i.e., Muslims, Christians, or Jews], coordination with them for the common good is possible.

Accusing Society of Unbelief

[AL-SIYASI AL-MISRI] What is your position toward some Islamic groups that accuse society of unbelief on the basis of God's word: "Who judges not according to what God has sent down—they are the unbelievers" [Koran 5:47]?

[Abu-al-Nasr] We follow the opinion of our guide Imam al-Hudaybi on the issue of accusation of unbelief, as contained in his well-known book *We Are Callers, Not Judges*. This was the view of the martyred Imam Hasan al-Banna, may God have mercy on him.

[AL-SIYASI AL-MISRI] In his last interview with AL-SIYASI AL-MISRI, Judge Ma'mun al-Hudaybi, the official spokesman, announced that Sayyid Qutb did not represent the Muslim Brotherhood. He was commenting on Sayyid Qutb's view that "Islamic society is a pagan society far from Islam; we live not in the abode of Islam, but in the abode of unbelief." Do you think that Judge al-Hudaybi was fortunate in his reply?

[Abu-al-Nasr] What I know is that the statement attributed to Judge al-Hudaybi was distorted and that he has already replied. The martyr Sayyid Qutb did not say that society was pagan, rather than Islamic. In any case, he had his personal opinion, and an individual's opinion is not necessarily the opinion of the group. We consider him one of Islam's greatest martyrs in modern times and give him his full due.

Building Scaffolds

[AL-SIYASI AL-MISRI] Some charge that you are out to establish a religious state and will build scaffolds for anyone who disagrees with you when you come to power. How true is this?

[Abu-al-Nasr] Secularists who separate religion from politics repeat this charge, which is false and biased. What we demand is a civilian government that upholds the teachings of Islam and rules by God's law.

[AL-SIYASI AL-MISRI] How do you interpret the slogan "Sovereignty belongs to God," which some Brotherhood leaders proclaim? What do you think of this demand?

[Abu-al-Nasr] The slogan "Sovereignty Belongs to God," in our view, means that the government should derive its laws and legislation from God's benevolent shari'ah, which is perfect in character and free from any deficiency.

No Autocrat Is Just

[AL-SIYASI AL-MISRI] What do you think about the just autocratic ruler that some Islamic thinkers, including Imam Muhammad 'Abduh, have advocated?

[Abu-al-Nasr] If a ruler is an autocrat, he can in no wise be just. Justice, in our view, is born of consultation, criticism, advice, censure, and turning to God and the Prophet in matters of disagreement.

Muslim Brotherhood and Terrorism

[AL-SIYASI AL-MISRI] The Muslim Brotherhood is accused of relying on terrorism as a means of coming to power. The basis lies in charges that the Brotherhood killed Salim Zaki and al-Nuqrashi and plotted to assassinate 'Abd-al-Nasir.

[Abu-al-Nasr] Imam al-Banna derived our methods from the Prophet's practice of summoning to God with wisdom and good admonition, not with terrorism and violence. The al-Khazindar and al-Nuqrashi incidents were the acts of individuals; the group and its leaders had no involvement in the matter, as investigations proved. 'Abd-al-Nasir's charade at al-Manshiyah is known to everybody; 'Abd-al-Nasir made it a pretext for liquidating the Muslim Brotherhood. In any event, God's call survived, while he and others passed away.

Change by Violence

[AL-SIYASI AL-MISRI] But what do you say about the martyr Imam Hasan al-Banna's call for change even if it requires the use of violence and force? Is such a call appropriate today?

[Abu-al-Nasr] I have already indicated that our call is based on wisdom and good admonition, not on violence and terrorism.

Biased Attack

[AL-SIYASI AL-MISRI] After the recent attacks on tourists and on police, accusations were leveled at the Brotherhood. How do you respond? What do you think of these terrorist operations? What do you think of the justifications some groups have announced for attacking tourists, such as that they violate the customs, traditions, and values of Islamic society?

[Abu-al-Nasr] I can state that the last few days have seen a biased, malicious attack on the Muslim Brotherhood, using fabrication and falsification in an attempt to charge the Muslim Brotherhood with incitement to terrorism and with combatting the flow of international tourists to Egypt despite the great economic gains for the country. Before this attack, some newspapers published statements and articles by many Brotherhood spokesmen affirming the principle of shari'ah law that we hold as an article of religion—that we do not approve of violence, whatever its source and whatever its form. We do not accept terrorism; we disapprove of it in all its forms. The foreigner who comes to our country as a tourist or otherwise has been guaranteed safety with regard to his life. His safety and tranquillity may not be violated. The attacks on some tourists were outrages unacceptable to shari'ah, reason, and humanity. Despite the clarity of this belief of ours, some have tried to misrepresent an article that appeared in a foreign newspaper, attributing to Judge al-Hudaybi things he never said and that the newspaper never attributed to him. Malicious campaigns of attacks on the Brotherhood followed. Greatly saddened by such claims, we state that they are untrue and pure lies, as shown by the fact that all investigations into the recent episodes and into those of the last quarter century have proved our innocence and that we have carefully adhered to our policy that violence and terrorism are at odds with the shari'ah and the correct understanding of Islam. Not only do violence and terrorism lead to increased tension, shake the nation's stability and security, and throw the nation into whirlpools of disturbances and confusion, they also impede the movement of progress and the course of the Islamic call.

If some tourists violate our Islamic customs in dress or otherwise, the government must take care to protect our Muslim society.

[AL-SIYASI AL-MISRI] How do you explain the Brotherhood's shifts among the political parties—Wafd, Labor, and the Liberals? Have these parties failed to express the Brotherhood's demands and attitudes?

[Abu-al-Nasr] To date, the Brotherhood has formed no partnership with any political party. The broad base of Muslim Brothers reject incorporation into any political party. We continue to hold our position. The political parties have not failed to express the Brotherhood's demands; they merely act in accordance with their own policies that fit their own goals.

Long-Range Missile Development Reported

93AF0486A Paris AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic
17 Mar 93 p 10

[Article by Mansur 'Atiyah: "New Egyptian Ballistic Missile, With Help From Russian Experts"]

[Text] Egypt is developing the prototype of a missile with a 450-km range as a first phase, to be increased to 1,600 km in the second phase.

It has been learned that Egypt has hired the services of Russian scientists and that these scientists work as independently and in total secrecy at a military base east of Cairo.

The Russian experts work without any official connection with Russia, assisting Egyptian scientists in the development of the missile.

According to plans, Egypt can produce this missile in 1995, with the more sophisticated (1,600-km range) model to be produced in 10 years.

Even though an official Egyptian source has strongly denied these reports, U.S. intelligence sources have confirmed them, adding that the Pentagon is aware of this activity.

These reports come at a time when Egypt has ended its partnership with Argentina and Iraq to produce the Condor-2 missile. This missile has been disassembled, and all of its parts have been turned over to U.S. military authorities. The Condor had a 1,000-km range.

Thus, Egypt has abandoned the Condor-2 project to develop its own project, enlisting the help of the above-mentioned [Russian] expertise.

It is well known that the Jewish state is witnessing concerted ballistic missile development programs. This state has developed the Arrow missile, which has cost \$158 million, 80 percent of which was paid by the United States.

Michael (Holf Kamp), the Arrow project director, has said that the United States will emerge a winner from the development of this missile and of the missile's electronic sensors which are considered the latest cry in the world in this regard. He said that the Arrow missile's extremely sophisticated sensor equipment can be merged in the future in the so-called THAADs [Theater High Altitude Air Defense System] missile system. He asserted that the Arrow missile offers a real advantage by the fact that it can activate its explosive head while at a short distance from the target, whereas precision targeting is required in the operation of [the other] missiles, which is difficult to accomplish.

In light of the escalating ballistic missile development experiments in the region, Egypt's entry into the field raises new questions about the necessity of establishing a

balance of forces among all the region's countries. These questions must be raised in the current peace negotiations.

IRAQ

Qatar To Send New Ambassador Despite Protests
93AE0447A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
13 Mar 93 p 4

[Article by Wafa'i Diyab: "Qatar Prepares To Appoint New Ambassador to Iraq"]

[Text] London—Gulf diplomatic sources said yesterday that Qatar was about to appoint a new ambassador to Baghdad, despite reservations by Gulf countries, including Kuwait.

These sources mentioned that the leading candidate for the post was the deputy administrator of the municipality of Doha, 'Abdallah Muhammad al-Khatir. The decree appointing him is to be issued after all the necessary formalities have been completed.

Al-Khatir will succeed the current ambassador, Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Rashid Al Khalifah, who was recently recalled to Doha for reappointment to another post. Qatar and Iraq are said to have reestablished diplomatic relations last October. The amir of Qatar, Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani, and Iraq's President Saddam Husayn exchanged congratulatory telegrams on the occasion of Qatar's national holiday and the arrival of the month of Ramadan—telegrams that the newspapers of the two countries published. Gulf sources think that Qatar is placing great importance in its foreign policy on what it calls "restoring Arab unity." They indicate that the new ambassador has been appointed to play a prominent role in this regard.

The same sources said that Iraq also is moving in this direction on the basis of a plan that its ambassador to Doha has presented to Qatari officials.

The plan, according to the same sources, calls for normalizing Iraqi-Kuwaiti relations, lifting the economic blockade on Baghdad, and discussing the case of the missing Kuwaiti prisoners in Iraq—in return for normalizing inter-Arab relations.

Kuwait recently rejected what it described as Qatari mediation in normalizing its relations with Iraq. In a letter that the first deputy prime minister and foreign minister, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, sent to Qatar's foreign minister, Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabr Al Thani, Kuwait said that the problem was not between Iraq and Kuwait, but between Iraq and the international community, which had issued 13 resolutions that it insisted should be implemented. These resolutions included Resolution 686, which demands that Baghdad release all Kuwaiti prisoners. Diplomatic sources mentioned that Doha responded to Kuwait with

a letter expressing understanding of the Kuwaiti position. Qatar's action was said to be no more than a humane gesture of good will on the occasion of Ramadan.

Al-Jabburi's Allegedly Killed Because of Syrian Ties

93AE0449A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 13 Mar 93
pp 1, 4

[Article: "Accused of Dealing With Damascus, al-Jabburi Executed by Iraqi Authorities"]

[Text] Irbil—Quoting Iraqis in contact with security agencies who fled Baghdad last week, trustworthy sources told AL-HAYAH that Brigadier General Muhammad Bilal al-Jabburi, whom Iraqi authorities recently executed, had been accused of conspiring against the state and President Saddam Husayn at the instigation of Damascus.

The sources added that al-Jabburi was responsible for the Syrian desk of the ruling Iraqi Ba'th party's military bureau. Headquartered in al-Mawsil near the Syrian border, his mission was "coordinating with the Syrian opposition to overthrow the Damascus regime."

The sources said that two Iraqi intelligence detachments had raided al-Jabburi's office in al-Mawsil to arrest him. Two other high officers, one of them a pilot, are believed to have been executed with him. Both also belonged to the large al-Jabbur clans allied with the Tikriti families that rule Iraq under Saddam Husayn's leadership.

The sources said that Major General 'Abd-al-Mutlaq al-Jabburi, commander of the 16th Corps, is rumored to have been imprisoned for five years on the charge of cooperating with Brig. Gen. Muhammad Bilal al-Jabburi. 'Abd-al-Mutlaq had been discharged from the Army, but the intelligence agencies arrested him about four months ago. Elders of the al-Jabbur family were also arrested, and their property, moveable and immovable, was confiscated.

The sources said that at the same time the Defense Ministry dismissed all of the members of the al-Jabbur clans from the special guard, special security, and emergency forces at the presidential palace.

A wave of rumors recently spread through Baghdad about measures aimed basically at tightening the grip of the Tikriti families on the government. Last week's edition of AL-WIFAQ, a newspaper published in London by the opposition Iraqi Democratic National Reconciliation Grouping, wrote, quoting "party sources in Baghdad," that there was a movement to oust a number of Revolutionary Command Council members and appoint relatives of Saddam to replace them. This would be accompanied by a cabinet reshuffling in which the Iraqi president's two sons, 'Udayy and Qusayy, would enter the government.

The Reconciliation Grouping is led by Salah 'Umar al-'Ali, a relative of Saddam. He was a Ba'th leader and minister of culture and information after the Ba'thists took power following a coup that overthrew former president 'Abd-al-Rahman 'Arif in July 1968.

The information that AL-WIFAQ published said that Iraq's two vice presidents, Taha Muhyi-al-Din Ma'ruf, who is a Kurd, and Taha Yasin Ramadan, will be dismissed from the Revolutionary Command Council, the supreme ruling body. They will be replaced by Defense Minister 'Ali Hasan al-Majid, who is a cousin of Saddam, and Husayn Kamil Hasan al-Majid, who is in charge of military industry and is also a cousin and in-law of Saddam.

The newspaper added that 'Udayy will be named minister of culture and information, and Qusayy will be named interior minister, replacing his uncle Watban, who will resign his position because of his deep differences with 'Ali Hasan al-Majid. The newspaper went on to say that the chief of intelligence, Lieutenant General Sabir al-Duri, has been nominated for the post of defense minister. He will be replaced by 'Abd Hasan al-Majid. The opposition newspaper added that rumors name Lieutenant General Sultan Hashim as the new head of general staff, replacing Lieutenant General Iyad Fatih al-Rawi, who will be given an overseas ambassadorship.

Informed sources in London said that Barzan al-Tikriti, Iraq's representative to the international organizations in Geneva, who was recently appointed political adviser to Saddam Husayn, will remain for the time being in Geneva, where his family is still located.

Daniel Ortega Interviewed, Praises Saddam

93AE0438A Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic 3 Mar 93
pp 14-15

[Interview with Sandinist leader Daniel Ortega by Ahmad Sabri in Iraq; Date not given: "Ortega: 'To Those Aspiring for Freedom, Saddam Husayn Is Symbolic Figure'"]

[Text] The name of Daniel Ortega, the fighter, has been linked to the history of Nicaragua, a country located in the center of Latin America. Nicaragua has a strategic location, overlooking the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Ortega became a professional politician early in life. He was imprisoned at the age of 14 before becoming the leader of the Sandinist Movement, the largest political movement in Latin America. The Sandinists used armed struggle to get to power, and they came to power in 1979 by ousting the dictator, Somoza.

Ortega defied the United States by rejecting its policy toward his country—a policy characterized by tutelage and hegemony. Ortega ruled Nicaragua, a country of 4 million people, for 11 years, during which he angered Washington by rejecting American threats and blackmail. That is why Washington imposed a blockade against his country for five years.

Ortega visited Iraq in 1990 in a show of solidarity with Iraq, which was resisting the U.S.-led colonialist mobilization of forces. Today, he returns to Baghdad to renew his sense of solidarity with Iraq and to stand by the country and its historic leaders who succeeded in foiling the aggression and its evil sequels in one of the historic fierce battles of our present age.

ALIF BA' interviewed Ortega during his visit to Iraq which took place a few days ago. Before starting the interview, Ortega said: "The minute we crossed the border and entered Iraq, I was struck by what I saw along the road, in the squares, or at sites along the road. All of this stuck in my mind. After the imperialist aggression against the people of Iraq, I realized that the people of Iraq would not be vanquished. I was also certain that they would overcome the crisis with the great ability they have to build and restore their country. This is what I believed, and this is what happened."

[Sabri] What do you make of such an achievement, and what does it signify politically?

[Ortega] The significance of your ability to build and restore what was destroyed during the war manifests itself in your determination and in the faith you have in your independent decision. You show that in the confidence you have in yourselves, and it is this confidence, backed up by the national will, that is worrying and provoking the aggressors. That is why you find them determined to continue the siege. I closely followed the measures you have been taking regarding the unfair siege that has been imposed on your people for more than two years. I sensed your determination to stand up to this siege by relying on your own abilities. Your self-reliance became evident in my country and in Latin America, where it is admired and appreciated. Workers, who are nationalists in every sense of the word, proceeded to build and to restore the country, and they did that in a manner that was innovative and creative. In my judgment, this is the secret of your success in this decisive confrontation. Your reliance on local production and the ban you set against importing materials which are not really needed by the people had a significant and a major effect on the success of your major campaign against the siege.

[Sabri] It has been two years since your meeting with President Saddam Husayn. What is your opinion of the man who is leading his people against all forms of hegemony and tutelage?

[Ortega] Ever since my first meeting with the president in 1990, I have been confident that Iraq will overcome the crisis, no matter how vicious that crisis might be. In my judgment, this is attributable to the sophistication and courage of President Saddam Husayn and the faith he has in the inevitability of victory and in the abilities of his people to be patient, to remain steadfast, and to stand up to the enemy. That is why I am saying that I found him to be strong, tenacious, and confident of Iraq's strong position, which is based on sacrifice. He is,

therefore, confident that the means for getting out of this crisis will be found. And that, too, is very important for overcoming all of the consequences of the aggression against Iraq.

[Sabri] How do you view the people of Iraq and their leader, President Commander Saddam Husayn? How do you view him as a role model who epitomizes the challenge to foreign domination?

[Ortega] Iraq and its brave leader Saddam Husayn have become role models for all those who aspire to freedom and emancipation. In Nicaragua and Latin America, we regard Iraqi steadfastness in the face of American aggression and the Iraqis' determination to rebuild and restore their country as feats of national heroism that we cherish. We value the results of Iraqi steadfastness and action on all levels.

[Sabri] Iraq announced an initiative to defuse the tension in the region and to find new ways to achieve peace. What is your evaluation of the Iraqi step?

[Ortega] Iraq has made every effort to pursue every course which could lead to peace. Its recent initiative, which has to do with bringing about the foundations for peace, was part of that effort. What is more important than all this is that Iraq's conduct relies on the abilities of the steadfast Iraqi people and their determination to persist in their efforts until all their goals are achieved. Foremost among these goals is that of lifting the unfair blockade that has been imposed on Iraq.

[Sabri] What steps are you taking in Latin America to see to it that this unfair blockade against Iraq is lifted?

[Ortega] The Sandinist Front and the people of Nicaragua, who were on the receiving end of a five-year, unfair American blockade, realize fully that the continuation of this inhuman blockade against a people for more than two years is considered a crime and a human tragedy. This crime is being committed in the name of international law, and its victims are children, old people, and women. An entire nation has been deprived of the simplest requirements for a normal life.

That is why we are looking at this blockade against the friendly state of Iraq, and we are doing everything we can by means of our relations with our comrades in arms in Latin America and all over the world to expose the United Nations' double standard and the danger of continuing the hateful, inhuman blockade against the people of Iraq. We will continue this approach in our efforts to champion the friendly people of Iraq in their human ordeal.

[Sabri] What are the characteristics of the coming period now that the Soviet Union has collapsed and the United States has the United Nations and its organizations all to itself?

[Ortega] The equation has been turned around completely, now that the Soviet Union has collapsed and is no longer one of the two superpowers in the international

equation. America has the international scene for itself, and it is conducting international politics in accordance with its strategies which are based on its own interests. Herein lies our role as fighters and national regimes in the world. Our role is to rely on the results of this new equation in finding new ways to undermine America's control, hegemony, and tutelage over nations. In my judgment this is essential to ward off the imminent danger we are facing because the danger of America's control and hegemony lies in the fact that America takes advantage of the international organization as well as its allies to impose their aggressive policy on nations. Iraq, Cuba, Libya, and the people of Palestine were the first victims of this approach.

[Sabri] What are your priorities for action at the present time?

[Ortega] Briefly stated, our main task at the present time is to use our revolutionary authority to defend what has been achieved for our people. We have to dedicate all our efforts to see to it that what has been achieved is not threatened and is preserved.

African Islamic Figure Visits, Praises Iraq

93AE0437A Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic
3 Mar 93 p 12

[Unattributed interview with Sidi Lamine Niasse, prominent Senegalese leader and manager of AL-FAJR: "African Islamic Figure to ALIF BA': 'The Mother of Battles Is a Great Victory for All Honorable People in the World'"]

[Text] Sidi Lamine Niasse, a prominent leader of the Tijaniya sect in Senegal and manager of AL-FAJR, an African Islamic weekly, visited Iraq recently and formed opinions and impressions of dimensions of the continued aggression against Iraq and of the Iraqi people's ability to stand fast in the face of the U.S. tyranny and domination. Niasse talked to ALIF BA' about the immortal meanings of the epic Mother of Battles, saying that this battle is a great victory for the Arabs, the Muslims, and all honorable people in the world because it has accomplished the crucial unity of the will for good against the will for evil and falsehood. The Iraqi people's heroic acts and feats and the honorable and lofty positions they have taken in confronting and struggling against aggression and in defeating the evil will are the object of attention and admiration of the world's Muslims. The images of the mythical steadfastness embodied by the Iraqi people in confronting the U.S. and NATO aggression and evil schemes and in rebuilding in amazing record time what the evil people had destroyed is a source of pride and esteem for the world's honorable and free men who battle tyranny and oppression. Iraq has now become an arena for the strongest Islamic battle of justice against tyranny and of right against falsehood and persecution.

[ALIF BA'] What is your interpretation of the fact that Iraq is targeted by imperialism and Zionism? In other words: Why Iraq?

[Niasse] The United States and its Western allies, egged by world Zionism, have targeted Iraq because it has cultural depth and because it constitutes an obstacle in the face of their attainment of their tangible economic interests in the region. Iraq shoulders the main burden in fighting the infidels, the enemies of God and of mankind. The Iraqi people have foiled the West's tattered slogans and have exposed its evil intentions toward Arabism, Islam, and peoples' freedom. This is why Iraq has become a shrine for Muslims and a lighthouse for free men in all parts of the world. Struggler and leader Saddam Husayn, may God preserve him, has been able to establish the bases of freedom, justice, and jihad and to build the edifice of heroism and glory that is baptized by the blood of the martyrs, by the emanation of prophecy, and by the will of God, Who has chosen Iraq to be leader of the procession of mujahidin and His sword over the heads of His enemies.

[ALIF BA'] How do the world's Muslims view the economic blockade that is imposed on the Iraqi people?

[Niasse] We represent a part of the great Islamic nation and our presence in Baghdad reflects the sympathy and support of Senegal's Muslims for the Iraqi people who face the atheistic Western tyranny. This tyranny is a heinous crime to which a Muslim people are subjected in what the major powers allege to be the age of civilization at a time when we approach the end of the 20th century. In addition to the crime of the aggression committed against the Iraqi people, there is perseverance in the crime of the unjust economic blockade imposed on Iraq, of starving Iraq's children, women, and old men, and of withholding medicine from its patients, thus causing the death of many innocent people whose only offense is that they are from a country which has refused to bow to the tyrants as numerous world leaders have bowed to them. But struggler Saddam Husayn will continue to fight tyranny and oppression proudly. He will continue to be a minaret that casts its light on the Islamic nation and to derive from this nation the strength to fight aggression wherever it may be.

Islamic School Teaches Religion in Kurdistan

93AE0413A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
17 Feb 93 p 17

[Article by 'Umar Bakkar: "Faculty of Law in Dahuk Lone Sanctuary for Islamic Studies in Iraqi Kurdistan"]

[Text] The Faculty of Islamic Law and Islamic Studies in Dahuk stands out as a lone sanctuary, shining like a shaft of light against the background of the Kurds' present circumstances and toward which all those thirsty for Islamic learning reach out.

Classes started at the faculty last Ramadan, when the Kurds were able to impose control over their area under

allied protection from the Iraqi Army's attacks. They were also able to establish self-rule in the midst of the continuing political, military, and economic problems related to it.

The faculty includes two sections: one dealing with Islamic Law and the other with Islamic Studies. About 100 students took their exams in Muharram at the end of the first term, and the rate of success was very high.

In addition, 100 regular and 60 part-time students signed up for the second term, which started last month. The faculty is run by the Islamic University Imam Muhammad Bin-Sa'ud, which oversees its educational, administrative and financial programs. The university establishes the faculty's curriculum and offers monthly stipends to the students to enable them to devote themselves entirely to their studies and concentrate exclusively on their pursuit of knowledge.

The Imam Bin-Sa'ud University also organized a two-week seminar on Islamic Studies in Northern Iraq in collaboration with the faculty and under the supervision of the university professors who have traveled there.

Associate Professor of Islamic Jurisprudence Dr. Mustafa Muslim was one of the teachers who took part in this program. He talked to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT about the difficulties facing Islamic teaching in Iraqi Kurdistan in general and the specific problems encountered by the program, as well as the positive response it elicited among the people and his high hopes in this regard.

The work load was heavy, Dr. Muslim said, as the participating students had to attend 60 lectures on Islamic Studies. These included the Holy Koran and the disciplines related to it, such as chanting and interpretation of the Koran, hadith and its disciplines, dogma, contemporary movements, critique, the life of Muhammad, and legal proceedings. Lectures were also delivered in mosques in Dahuk, Zakho and Samil as well as in public conference halls like the Kurdistan Teachers' Union's and the Jamahiryah Hall. The 150 participants in the seminar included mosque leaders and lecturers, Islamic education teachers at secondary schools, and university students.

Closing Ceremony

The closing ceremony was attended by government officials, community leaders, and representatives of official organizations. Symbolic prizes were awarded to the top students, the winners of the Koran chanting competition, and to all of the parties that collaborated with the organizers of the seminar. It was the kind of cultural event the like of which had never taken place there before, which prompted the representatives of the other cities to urgently request that similar manifestations be held in Irbil, al-Sulaymaniyah, Shaqlawah, Salah-al-Din, and other places.

Kurds' Responsiveness to Seminar

Dr. Mustafa Muslim indicated that the faculty and the seminar proved to be so popular that delegates from Irbil and al-Sulaymaniyah urged us to request the head of the Imam University to open branches in some of the cities next year and to admit students to pursue higher education in Riyadh so that they could constitute the nucleus of a future teaching body in these faculties. Moreover, the director of the teaching centers dependent on the Ministry of Religious Endowments, Dr. Muhammad al-Zaki, asked us to transmit his request to the director of the university for these centers to be linked to the faculty of Islamic Law and placed under its direct financial, administrative, and educational supervision. These centers number five in all, and their total annual budget does not exceed \$100,000.

Difficulties and Problems

With regard to the difficulties and problems encountered organizing this seminar, Dr. Muslim had this to say: "Even though Iraqi Kurdistan is one of the nearest places in which the university set up educational programs, getting to it proved to be extremely difficult. One has to fly to Istanbul, then travel by land to Diyarbakir or (Bitaman) in southeast Turkey, with an occasional stop-over in Ankara. This is followed by an overland trip, which takes about four hours, to reach the Turkish-Iraqi border. Exit formalities are interminable, and entry formalities are equally lengthy for you get to Dahuk by air. If you travel in winter, you have to contend with snowy conditions, which considerably hamper the journey. Another problem area is related to the tension between the Turkish Army and the Kurdish Workers Party, which renders the road unsafe except very early in the morning.

Yet another source of problems was the lack of proper means of communication. There are no telephone links, and when the time came for us to arrange for the participation of the two Provinces of Irbil and al-Sulaymaniyah, we had to dispatch two of our brothers there in person. When we decided to use the television to announce the program, we realized that each province had a television station of its own.

These obstacles, Dr. Muslim said, should be added to those facing Islamic teaching in Kurdistan such as the lack of properly trained university teachers. In view of the terrorist atmosphere prevailing in Baghdad and al-Mawsil and the uncertainty surrounding Kurdistan's political future and its viability, we do not expect a positive response from the Kurdish professors now working at the Faculty of Islamic Law in Baghdad and at the University of al-Mawsil.

Still another problem is the Kurds' precarious economic situation resulting from the international embargo and the internal embargo imposed by the Iraqi regime, not to mention the impediments created by the Turkish Kurdish Workers Party to the delivery of humanitarian aid that transits through Turkey. This has led to widespread

shortages of numerous items and skyrocketing prices of those items still available. Needless to say, all these factors are reflected in and adversely affect the quality of education here.

Hopes and Suggestions

Dr. Muslim concluded his remarks by mentioning his suggestions to the Faculty: link the Islamic Teaching Centers, which now are under the authority of the local Ministry of Religious Endowments, with the Faculty of Islamic Law in Dahuk; set up a committee to review their curriculum and reorganize the Educational Affairs Department; increase the number of seminars on Islamic law, with next year's session to be held in Arbil, in cooperation with the Department of Religious Affairs at the Ministry of Endowments or the Union of Kurdistan's Religious Scholars (Irbil Branch); and, last, create a research center at the faculty and entrust it with the study of the Islamic centers' programs and their curriculum.

ISRAEL

Shohat on Unemployment, Monetary Policy, Shares

93AA0014B Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 5 Mar 93
p B1

[Article by Judy Maltz]

[Text] Yesterday, Finance Minister Bayga Shohat began his work day earlier than usual. By 0700, he was already sitting in his office in Tel Aviv trying to put his desk in order before leaving for the United States Saturday night.

Shohat finally finished work on the recovery plan for the sick fund this week, so can allow himself to go abroad feeling a little less pressured.

In the early hours of the morning, he had an appointment with the budget manager to finalize a few more matters; then, in the afternoon, a meeting with the director of the Bank of Israel to try to reach an agreement with him, before the trip, on a timetable for decisions on the sale of the banks.

What was worrying the finance minister more than anything else yesterday morning was when he would find the time to buy a new pair of shoes for the trip. It would be impossible to speed up his discussion with the chief of staff, but perhaps he could skip the meeting planned for the afternoon with some businessman he does not know.

When he started out, there were some who said that the job of finance minister was too big for Bayga. But it seems that he is slowly but surely fitting into the job. He is more decisive today, less influenced by bureaucrats, and less afraid of facing off with the Bank of Israel. What

he does still have is his waistline. Because of the constant pressure, the finance minister has not been able to stick to a diet.

[HA'ARETZ] What made you come to the conclusion this week that there is no escape from sponsored works?

[Shohat] The question is how you look at the matter. I have said, I say now, and always will say that sponsored works cannot solve the problem of unemployment in a fundamental way. It is true that I agreed to certain projects on a very limited scale, in a limited number of places, and that these could be considered "sponsored works."

We are speaking of 3,500 people who will be working in Jewish National Fund tree-planting projects. As I pointed out, this is my idea and it is to lower the pressure in certain places, but it does not solve the problem of unemployment. For the most part it is just cosmetic.

It is important to have fewer people on the unemployment rolls, that is true. But, I am sorry to say, this is not really the right economic answer.

[HA'ARETZ] With all the growth in the economy and in exports, how is it possible that the unemployment situation just keeps getting worse and worse?

[Shohat] I do not accept that conclusion. The unemployment situation has pretty much remained balanced; the level is about the same. There has been a rise in the percentage of unemployed persons because the base has broadened so much. There are more people all the time wanting to work. If 80,000 people join the work force, and 70,000 places of employment are created, that still leaves 10,000 new job seekers.

Still, the economy is growing. If that were not true, it would mean a catastrophe here.

[HA'ARETZ] The State of Israel will be recruiting a billion dollars in American guarantees this month. Why not invest this money directly into creating jobs?

[Shohat] What does it mean, to invest directly in creating jobs? Places of employment can be created only by a natural process of economic growth, and by government decisions on investments in infrastructure. There is no formula that will change a billion dollars into places of employment.

I want to say that although I am optimistic, I also call for patience from our government ministers. When they look at the unemployment situation, what do they really focus on? At the fact that the level has risen, or at the fact that 70,000 new jobs have been created?

I realize that every person who is unemployed is an individual with problems on a human, personal level, and I also know what it means to be unemployed. But we have to tell people the truth: "My friends, the solution to the problem of unemployment will take a little time."

There is another problem, though. Employers are looking for workers, but the requests are going unanswered, and the employment service is forced to refer employers to Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza.

[HA'ARETZ] How do you propose solving the problem?

[Shohat] I do not know. I just want to say that a kind of "culture" is being created that needs to be examined. We need to clarify why, in a situation like this, in a time when employers are begging for workers, there are so many unemployed. I will not be ignoring this subject.

[HA'ARETZ] When you took over the office, you said that your main weakness was lack of familiarity in the area of monetary policy. Are you more familiar with it, today?

[Shohat] I have learned, as they say, "how to direct my feet."

[HA'ARETZ] What do you think of the Bank of Israel's monetary policy?

[Shohat] There has clearly been a market imbalance in the relationship between the dollar and the shekel, and between the gains on foreign currency investments abroad and here. As a result, there has been a great flight of foreign currency [from the country]. This phenomenon was halted when the Bank of Israel raised the interest a bit.

But I think that the Bank of Israel needs to act now to lower interest again, though it has not gone up dramatically, nor do I think any real harm has been done to the business sector. But we should lower interest, while still guarding the equilibrium, so that it will not be worthwhile to buy foreign currency.

[HA'ARETZ] How far would you like to see it lowered?

[Shohat] A percent, or one-and-a-half percent, the way the interest on the Bank of Israel's stock offers went down.

[HA'ARETZ] You know, of course, that the director of the Bank of Israel will say that the question of interest is not within your realm of responsibility...

[Shohat] The finance ministry's realm of responsibility is whatever happens in the Israeli economy, and monetary policy is part of that. But the overall responsibility for the economy is the finance minister's. If it turns out that as a result of a monetary policy—which would be, I agree, the operational responsibility of the Bank of Israel—there are problems in the Israeli economy, then the finance minister's role will be to deal with the matter, and express his opinion to the director of the Bank of Israel.

I do not accept the idea that there are in effect two systems here, each one working alone. The responsibility for results is the finance minister's and nobody else's. It is not reasonable that the Bank of Israel should run an

independent policy in this matter, and the finance minister should be held responsible for the policy's effect on the economy.

[HA'ARETZ] Because the drops that occurred over the last few weeks in the stock market, do share prices today more closely reflect the real value of the companies being traded on the market?

[Shohat] Let us leave the subject of the stock market, all right? How do you put it—someone who has been burned by boiling water will ever after be careful, even with cool water.

[HA'ARETZ] Still, I would like to ask you a theoretical question. Do you think that it is justified to tax exempt income from capital gains while at the same time heavily taxing income from wages?

[Shohat] I would rather not give my personal opinion on the subject, because if I did I would be jumping in with conclusions before the committees dealing with the subject got their chance. All I can say is that we are examining the matter.

[HA'ARETZ] What will happen with the Bank Hapoalim stock issue if you do not reach an agreement with the Bank of Israel about necessary changes in the banking system?

[Shohat] I will be sitting with the director of the Bank of Israel today and discussing that very subject. I want to try to keep offering shares in both Poalim and Le'umi until the end of May, the last date it will still be possible to base the rates on the December table.

There is still no final decision, but the tendency is toward going ahead and selling, and I very much hope we will be able to progress on deciding several topics that have been controversial.

[HA'ARETZ] That is, even if no agreement is reached with the Bank of Israel, the intention is to go through with the sale?

[Shohat] In the end, we will have to decide once and for all, because if there is no agreement with the Bank of Israel, it will be just as impossible to sell the banks in four, five, or six years. Although the final word will be the finance minister's, I hope to achieve formulas that will allow a joint decision on the subject. But if there continue to be subjects under dispute, I will have to decide the issue.

[HA'ARETZ] Will you support breaking up the banks?

[Shohat] Each case has to be examined individually. I did not say that I am for or against breaking them up. I said that this should be done through legislation, and that a warning should be included in the prospectus, saying that this is likely to happen.

I do not know whether we will reach an agreement on this matter. There are several banks on which there is

agreement that they should be broken up: for example, Barkley's Discount should be separated from Discount, and 'Igud from Le'umi. Still, I do not think it is necessary to take tiny banks and cut them off from the system.

[HA'ARETZ] Do you think that institutional investors from the banks should be given the opportunity to buy shares in those same banks?

[Shohat] That should be very limited. We should also look into what the money market will be able to buy. I think there should be a limit both on the section in which institutional investors buy in another bank, and on the section in which institutional investors buy in the bank to which they belong. [HA'ARETZ] Did 'Amiram Sivan influence your decision to move up the date of the Bank Hapoalim stock issue?

[Shohat] Of course not! It is true that 'Amiram wanted the bank sold, but he had no influence in the matter. That means it was not pressure that led to it, because the decision was not made in a day. It was a process that lasted a long time.

[HA'ARETZ] In the eight months that you have been minister of finance, you have barely succeeded in selling one government company. How do you explain that?

[Shohat] First of all, we did succeed in selling the I.D.B. shares. I also sold 5 percent of "Israel Chemicals," and I hope that next week we will close the sale of "Mivne Ta'asiya." We have made definite progress in the matter, and I very much hope that we will be freeing ourselves from two major obstacles that have been in our way—the question of the general licensing of "Bezek," which will enable us to sell another 25 percent of the company's shares this year, and amendment of the concession laws for the Dead Sea works, which will enable us to sell another 25 percent of "Israel Chemicals" shares.

There are another two companies that we intend to sell, shortly—"Shekem" and "Melem"—so I think that this year we will be offering much more stock for sale than we did last year.

[HA'ARETZ] You sound really satisfied at the way this is progressing.

[Shohat] No, I am not satisfied. I just say that although this is hard, it is going better than it did in earlier years—but I am still not satisfied.

[HA'ARETZ] In December, you were supposed to decide how to proceed in the investigation of the textiles sector. What is holding up that decision?

[Shohat] To tell the truth, it is simply a matter of timetables and order of priorities. This is not a decision that will affect the coming year, but rather one that will have an effect several years from now. I imagine that the decision on this matter will come up when I return from abroad.

[HA'ARETZ] What are your relations with the director of the Bank of Israel like, after all the conflicts between the two of you over the Bank Hapoalim stock issue?

[Shohat] The relationship is fine. There have been plenty of disagreements, but altogether I think that it is fine. We bear no grudges against each other. We got together the day after the event.

[HA'ARETZ] During the budget debates, you said that the director is a little cut off from reality. Did you think the things he has said about the stock market are proof of that?

[Shohat] I would rather not comment on what the director has said. If I begin to respond to every sentence he utters, and he responds to every sentence I utter, that really will create unnecessary tension.

[HA'ARETZ] Has your relationship with the prime minister improved lately?

[Shohat] I do not know why the relationship needs improving. It has always been very good.

Budget for Security in Territories Reported

93AA0014C Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 28 Feb 93 p 15

[Article by Roni Shaked]

[Text] The military's budget for Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza will total 827 million shekels this year. Thus it was reported yesterday by the military, after the prime minister/defense minister accepted the recommendations of Major General Dani Rothschild, operations coordinator for the territories, and authorized publication of the budget.

The budget designated for the territories has been authorized by a joint commission of the Knesset's finance, foreign affairs, and defense committees.

This is the first time since 1967 that this budget has been published. In the past, a protest was presented to the High Court of Justice on the subject, but the state attorney responded that the government was not legally required to publish the budget for the territories.

The prime minister authorized the publication in order—among other reasons—to demonstrate greater openness and good will toward the population of the territories, and to emphasize that, contrary to rumors circulating there, the government is contributing to the budget for the territories, and not transferring the money collected there to pay the needs of the State of Israel.

The budget this year is based on income totalling 489 million shekels from the West Bank, another 233 million from the Gaza Strip, and another 105 million contributed by the state. The main part of the expenses goes for wages, 435 million shekels; upkeep and services, 250 million shekels; and development, 142 million shekels.

As mentioned above, the operations coordinator for the territories, Maj. Gen. Dani Rothschild, asked the government to expand its participation in the budget for the territories, to help further economic development and the creation of jobs in order to address the problem of poverty in the territories.

Increased Settlement To Counter Nuclear Threat

93AA0014A Tel Aviv HAYARDEN in Hebrew Feb 93 p 1

[Article by A. Avishai; first paragraph is HAYARDEN introduction]

[Text] The danger of chemical or nuclear attack against Israel makes it imperative to settle a million Jews in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza.

The news items piling up lately about Iran's efforts to produce practical nuclear weapons in the next few years, and about the stocks of chemical weapons already in existence in Syria, Iraq, and Egypt—as well as the latest article in THE NEW YORK TIMES (based on intelligence reports from the United States and Europe) about a new Libyan plant east of Tripoli for the manufacture of chemical weapons—raise anew the problem of the dangerous concentration of the Israeli population on the strip of coast between Haifa and 'Ashdod. The problem becomes especially serious in light of the fact that the Arab countries and Iran are equipping themselves with more and more of those sophisticated ballistic missiles that could turn the entire area between Teheran and Tel Aviv, or Tripoli and Tel Aviv, into a "primary strike zone."

The Gulf war has already proven that the regions of Israel safest from Iraqi missile attack are Jerusalem (mixed population), Judaea and Samaria (the same), and the Gaza Strip (mainly Arab). It is true that Haifa and B'er Sheva' also were not hit in that war, but the very fact of such a large Jewish concentration in them should start us thinking about the future. And it should be pointed out in this context that many tens of thousands of residents of the coastal strip voted with their vehicles, fleeing eastward in an instinctive, spontaneous "population dispersal."

There are some who believe that the nuclear deterrent in Israel's hands will be enough to thwart anyone from starting an unconventional war in the Near East. And even if the Arabs reached a chemical and nuclear balance of power with Israel, they would undoubtedly think it over a hundred times before exposing themselves to the mutual destruction such a war can be expected to bring. And of course the other nuclear powers would just not sit wringing their hands if faced with such a threat—not only because it would threaten humanity as a whole, but because it would totally disrupt oil production. But—and here is the great question mark—there is no absolute guarantee that the balance of power in our region would behave the same way it did between the United States and the Soviet Union, if only because the factor of

Islamic extremism is irrational by nature, and it would take just one insane leader to tip the scales toward "Let my soul die with Palestine." It should not be forgotten, either, that crazy leaders with a potential for mass destruction from afar exist right now beyond the circle of neighboring states carrying on peace negotiations with Israel.

This reality raises anew the special security value of the old plan (with new targets) for dispersing the Israeli population eastward and southward. This time we are speaking mainly of urban settlement. Just as Jerusalem with its mixed population constitutes a sort of "safe haven" for half a million Jews, massive Jewish concentrations could also arise in Hebron, Bethlehem, Beyt 'El, eastern Nablus, southern Jenin, and western Jericho, not to mention the nuclei of Jewish cities that already exist, in 'Ari'el, 'Alfei-Menashe, Ma'ale 'Efraim, 'Emanu'el, Kedumim, and Shevei-Shomron, each of which has the infrastructure to support a population of tens of thousands. It would also be possible to build a city (a second Yamit) between Gaza and Khan Yunis. In other words, "...the settlement in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip of a million or more Jews from the swollen megalopolis on the coastal strip, as well as the strategic dispersal of industrial parks and army bases."

All this is not a substitute for deterrent weapons, nor for the necessary diplomatic means. It is simply a rational safety measure, which, of course, will be rejected by those circles that call themselves "sane," but it is much saner than what Israeli policy makers are trying out right now.

KUWAIT

National Assembly Addresses Citizenship

93AE0419B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
19 Mar 93 p 3

[Report from Kuwait by Muhammad al-Dumayyan: "National Assembly's Legal and Legislative Committee Equates Sons of Naturalized Kuwaitis With Sons of Constituent Kuwaitis"]

[Text] Deputy Hamad al-Ju'an, chairman of the Legal and Legislative Committee of the Kuwaiti National Assembly, said that at a recent meeting, the committee ratified a draft law that would "grant full Kuwaiti citizenship to the sons of naturalized Kuwaitis." He explained that "they would then enjoy all of the political rights guaranteed by the state" and pointed out that "the law will be enacted shortly." Two nights ago, the Kuwaiti Bar Association held a Ramadan discussion meeting titled "Kuwaiti Citizenship: Between Reality and Hope" at which al-Ju'an said that the new law would be a gift.

Al-Ju'an sat on a panel at the meeting with Deputies Mubarak al-Duwaylah and Ya'qub Hayati. The meeting, which was attended by National Assembly Speaker Ahmad al-Sa'dun, focused primarily on the application

of the Citizenship Law, especially Article 2, which defines a Kuwaiti as "any person born in or outside of Kuwait to a Kuwaiti father."

Al-Ju'an asserted that the National Assembly was deeply interested in the issue and pointed out that so far 28 deputies have submitted proposals or draft-laws on the uniform citizenship issue. He discussed the Kuwaiti phenomenon of "nonimplementation or the wrong implementation of laws" and said that "that was exactly what happened with the Citizenship Law. It behooves us, therefore, to demand guarantees for its proper implementation by the executive branch by not allowing it freedom of action without oversight."

Deputy Mubarak al-Duwaylah emphasized the necessity of "removing the class system from Kuwaiti society by amalgamating the various classes of Kuwaiti citizenship and by vesting naturalized citizens with all of the political rights." Al-Duwaylah repeatedly said this was necessary "to ward off serious social upheavals that could be unbearable for Kuwait."

Al-Duwaylah advocated "winning the loyalty of all comers to Kuwait, regardless of nationality," in order to help "maintain Kuwaiti stability." He then announced that the Islamic Constitutional Movement supports a single [class of] Kuwaiti citizenship.

He called for flexibility in the implementation of the law, especially as it relates to abrogating citizenship, and emphasized the need for instituting punitive action against "all those who would betray Kuwait."

Al-Duwaylah urged prompt resolution of the bidun [stateless] problem, which he said has grown more intricate and complex over time and "has festered as a result of misapplying the Law."

Deputy Ya'qub Hayati said that the problem with the current Citizenship Law is in its application, especially with regard to Article 2. He called for "a dialogue between the legislative and executive branches in order to deal with all unresolved issues, especially as they relate to the Kuwaiti Citizenship Law."

Hayati said that it did not make sense for the sons of constituent Kuwaitis and the sons of naturalized Kuwaitis to live together in the same environment and yet be endowed with disparate political rights.

He emphasized that a juridical entity should be created for the biduns and that "rights should be given all those who are due them."

On a related point, Riyadh al-Sani', secretary general of the Kuwaiti Bar Association, said that it was the intention of the Kuwaiti legislators to apply Article 2 to the sons of naturalized Kuwaitis because they "represent a pillar of society but have been denied their rights because of improper application of the law."

Al-Sani' advocated "equality among the classes of Kuwaiti society by [sweeping them into] a single class of

Kuwaiti citizenship and by allowing judicial oversight over citizenship issues in order to guarantee proper application."

Al-Sani' also called upon National Assembly deputies, in the name of justice, to standardize classes of citizenship in Kuwait in order to turn the country into an oasis of equality and justice, especially because all [Kuwaitis] suffered great hardship as a result of the Iraqi invasion."

Finance Minister Criticizes Assembly Oversight

93AE0419C London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 19 Mar 93 p 11

[Report From Kuwait by Fadyah al-Zu'bi: "Al-Khurafi Criticizes Summoning Ministers As A Group; Too Many Investment Cooks"]

[Text] Kuwaiti Finance Minister Jasim al-Khurafi [as published] told AL-SHARQ-AL-AWSAT in an exclusive interview that the National Assembly's Finance Committee has been slow to summon ministers until now."

He added that he relayed to the committee chairman and its members his "astonishment that the three ministers were summoned as a group." He added that he also explained to the committee that far too many committees have been created to research, investigate, and inquire into Kuwaiti investments abroad and that the multiplicity of groups overseeing those investments would not so much serve them as create confusion and distraction. He emphasized the need for coordinating among those committees, for divorcing politics from the issue, and for focusing on Kuwaiti interests, on recovering rightful claims, and on preserving remaining assets. Al-Khurafi emphasized that the problem of Kuwaiti investments abroad should be handled "with wisdom and in coordination with the authorities concerned."

Al-Khurafi said that he advised the committee of the measures he took with regard to those investments since he became ministry of finance, including the appointment of auditors, the creation of an executive committee, and the promulgation of executive regulations that define the authorities and limitations of all agencies involved with investments.

He added that he also infused the Investment Bureau in London with new managers and new national blood.

It is to be noted that former Minister of Finance Jasim al-Khurafi was at the helm of the Ministry of Finance from mid-1985 until about three months prior to the invasion.

Oil Minister Discusses Cost of Tankers

93AE0419A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 13 Mar 93 p 11

[Report from Kuwait: "Kuwaiti Minister of Petroleum: Tankers Cost \$2.7 Billion"]

[Text] Kuwaiti Oil Minister 'Ali al-Baghli said that the aggregate purchasing value and operating costs of tankers owned by the Kuwait Oil Tanker Company amounts to 822,698 million dinars, or approximately \$2.7 billion.

Minister al-Baghli said in answer to a parliamentary inquiry two days ago that the company owns 48 tankers with an aggregate purchasing value of 455.1 million Kuwaiti dinars (\$1.487 billion) and that it cost 367.6 million Kuwaiti dinars (\$1.201 billion) to operate those tankers in the 1981-1992 period. [as published]

During that period, the minister said, the company leased some of its tankers to 48 other companies for [carrying] different types of cargo. He explained that 17 tankers were leased to carry crude, 24 to carry [oil] derivatives, four to carry liquified gas, two to carry fuel, and one to carry crude fuel. He added that the Kuwait Petroleum Organization was among those who leased tankers from the company.

Al-Baghli said in his parliamentary response that the tankers were offered for lease on world tanker markets and as demand warranted through brokers and maritime bureaus, but always at the best available world rates. He added that daily lease rates are determined in accordance with world standards issued by the London association of tanker brokers, which reports semiannually on median lease rates.

The minister announced that recently it was agreed to lease all of the tankers to the Kuwait Petroleum Organization for use in transporting crude oil and oil products from Kuwait and other regions.

The parliamentary inquiry to al-Baghli came on the heels of the current investigation of certain former tanker company managers who were accused of embezzlement and of managing the leasing of tankers for personal gain.

Last January, the Kuwaiti Prosecutor General's Office arrested Hasan (Qabazid), the company's former deputy director general who remains in custody pending completion of the investigation. The prosecutor general also issued orders denying travel privileges to former director general 'Abd-al-Fattah al-Badr and to impound his assets after he left Kuwait for London. The minister ignored mentioning or did not allude to whether the Prosecutor General's Office will summon former Oil Minister Shaykh 'Ali al-Khalifah for questioning about the type of operations carried during his time in office.

AL-SHAL Report on New Investment Corporation

93AE0419D London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 20 Mar 93 p 12

[Report from Kuwait: "Contrary to All Expectations: AL-SHAL Deems al-Badr Unlikely to Head New Kuwaiti Investment Corporation"]

[Text] AL-SHAL economic report said it expects the head of the Investment Bureau in London to be excluded from the new management team to be set in place after merging the Investment Bureau with the General Investment Authority in Kuwait, even though all indications point to the likelihood that 'Ali Rashid al-Badr, director general of the Investment Bureau in London, will head the organization that will be created by the merger. Kuwait's Council of Ministers is expected to reach a decision on the merger next Monday.

Following is the text of AL-SHAL's economic report:

Nonperforming Debt

The issue of nonperforming debt needs to be resolved no later than 30 April 1993, which we believe to be the final deadline. Last week's main, and only, development was perhaps a report of a proposed solution attributed to the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry. In brief, the reported version calls at a minimum for forgiving debts up to 20,000 Kuwaiti dinars and for repayment, in cash and immediately of 35 percent of the debt balance, without interest, it seems, for those who owe more than 20,000 dinars. The latter would have the option to reschedule their debt over three years.

Having reviewed chamber reports since the 1960's, we believe that its current proposal is different and does not cover the whole issue or take into consideration the impact on the country's financial position, even though we believe that the chamber is well aware of them. Were we to assume in theory that all debtors would pay their obligations promptly and in cash, the amounts paid would in no way exceed 1 billion Kuwaiti dinars. It is our belief that the proposal would, at a minimum, result in direct losses of some 4 billion dinars. This cannot be tolerated. Its political and social implications would truly endanger the country's financial future. To rationalize that by saying that fair implementation is impossible as evidenced by the shortcomings of the old nonperforming debt program is not in itself, as we see it, an argument for paying such a price, even though conditions have changed financially and administratively.

The proposal also calls for completely forgiving certain of the debts. This would be further invitation to encourage the perpetuation of noncompliance, albeit partially, which has been the most serious phenomenon of the al-Manakh aftermath. The business sector was perhaps the one most impacted by that phenomenon and to suffer the most from it. Proper and healthy business cannot grow in an atmosphere devoid of respect for the law, for contracts, or for one's word. We assume that the chamber is qualified and responsible enough to deal with that.

The post-feast period will no doubt see wide-scale debate over this issue. The proposed solutions will directly and indirectly impact a large number of people on either side, both as creditors and as debtors. We hope that the debate

will remain objective and will take into consideration the possible cost to all parties, especially in terms of the future.

Foreign Investments

Rumors are circulating in the country about a possible reshuffle of the board of directors of the General Investment Authority, ostensibly in an attempt to actually merge the London Bureau into the Investment Authority, which has so far controlled it only in name. It is believed that the Council of Ministers will discuss the matter in its final form the day after tomorrow, having already approved it in principle at its last meeting. We cannot vouch for the accuracy of this report, however.

Perhaps the most salient change will be excluding the head of the London Bureau from the current organization—a development supposed to have taken place some time ago. The change will also affect 'Abdallah al-Qabandi, the Investment Authority's current managing-director, even though he has been in office only since January 1991 and has therefore served only two years of his four-year term. We do not want to intrude on the [contemplated] changes but we do not approve of linking the two [position] changes or of effecting them at the same time because of the essential differences between the two personalities and the reasons for their removal. [To do so] could reflect unfavorably on the managing director, particularly since the changes will include nobody else but a third person who has already resigned any way. This in no way impugns our view that the new [board] members, and those who will serve renewed terms are all people noted for their competence and honesty. It is our hope, therefore, that this issue will be treated in a manner that would maintain respect for public office and would alleviate the harm indirectly induced by that action.

The General Investment Authority has changed its managers in Spain by appointing Mahmud al-Nuri and Salah al-Ma'usharji to head its team there. The reason for that, we believe, is the diminishing volume of business after the holding company and its affiliates and subsidiaries sought the protection of the law. We believe that if the situation in Spain persists, it would not be implausible to the rest of the companies. There is no doubt that the anticipated change of management, even if follows a different scenario, would gradually transform the London Bureau into a representative office, albeit a little larger than new representative offices in more than one site [country].

Kuwait Stock Exchange

Market performance was more active last week than in the preceding nine weeks. This was reflected in all primary market indicators. The number of companies listed on the exchange remains at 39. The shares of 37 of those companies were traded. The AL-SHAL index stood at 89 points at the end of trading last Wednesday. This is a rise of 2.1 points from the previous week and a

decline of 11 points from the value of those companies on 1 Aug 90. Eleven companies advanced; 25 declined, and one company remained unchanged compared with market prices on 1 August 1990.

A total of 28.02 million shares changed hands, for a daily average of about 5.650 million shares and for an increase of 84.6 percent over the preceding week. The value of shares traded rose by 49.5 percent to about 6.49 Kuwaiti dinars, or about 1.3 million dinars per day on average. The volume of transactions rose by 60.5 percent to 645 trades for a daily average of 129 transactions.

As usual, the National Bank of Kuwait led the trades with 7.7 percent of the volume and 30.6 of the value, followed by Gulf Bank with 23.8 percent of the volume and 19.2 percent of value, and Cellular Telephone with 4.8 percent of the volume and 8.6 percent of value. The banking sector accounted for 67.8 percent of the volume and for 75.8 percent of value.

By the end of last week, 14 companies, or about 36 percent of those relisted, had announced plans for dividend distributions, which is two companies more than in the preceding week. The two new companies, both Kuwaiti, added some 2.6 million Kuwaiti dinars as cash distributions to bring the volume of planned cash distributions to about 52.7 million Kuwaiti dinars.

TUNISIA

Summary of 1993 Finance Law Reported

93AF0478A Tunis CONJUNCTURE in French
Jan-Feb 93 pp 28-29

[Text] The 1993 finance law establishes three special treasury funds and includes other measures relative to financial, economic, social, ecological and tax matters.

Three Special Funds Created

The National Solidarity Fund: This fund will make monies available, on instructions from the head of state, for activities to assist built-up areas that lack infrastructure.

Pollution Clean-Up Fund: This fund will be used to assist companies in launching pollution clean-up programs, for example in the industrial zones of Sfax, Ben Arous, Gabes, and Sousse. The fund will consist of international assistance grants and loans. In that connection, Tunisia has received a loan of 15 million ECUs [European Currency Units] from the European Investment Bank and a grant of 10 million marks from Germany.

Tourist Areas Protection Fund: This fund will receive 50 percent of revenues generated by the tax on hotels. It is intended as a means to improve the tourism environment and to support municipal sanitation activities.

Protection of Local Industry

A countervailing customs duty will be temporarily be levied in an effort to protect local industry against unfair competition arising from the lifting of restrictions on imports of consumer goods that are also produced in Tunisia. Customs duties will be adjusted by 10 to 30 percent, depending upon the degree of protection that is sought.

At the same time, customs duties on imports for which there is no Tunisian equivalent will be lowered.

Special Measures Benefiting the Crafts Industry

Craft activities will receive greater support.

Equipment and supplies used in the crafts sector, for which no equivalents exist on the local market, will be exempt from customs duties and the value-added tax.

Locally manufactured equipment and supplies will be exempt from the value-added tax.

Products made of silk will henceforth be subject to the minimum rate of 6 percent, instead of 29 percent.

Urban Environment

Municipal activities will be given greater support and municipal resources will be supplemented.

Equipment and supplies used in garbage collection and road resurfacing programs will be exempt from customs duties and the tax on business volume. These measures will benefit locally manufactured equipment and supplies.

In addition, the 1-percent tax on hotel business volume will be raised to 2 percent. The measure is aimed at providing municipalities in tourist areas with the funds they need to carry out their sanitation and environmental protection responsibilities.

Measures Benefiting the Banking Sector

Measures were enacted with the aim of augmenting the internal resources of banks. They entail:

- reduce the funds earmarked by bad debts of the taxable amount by 30 to 40 percent
- exemption from the corporate tax for capital gains realized on sales of stock;
- exemption of interest on outstanding claims with a maturity date of 31 December 1991 or earlier.

Social Concerns

The handicapped will be the primary beneficiaries of these measures.

No value-added tax or countervailing customs duties will be charged on buses purchased for the transportation of handicapped individuals.

In the interests of young people, the value-added tax on imported entertainment games will be reduced to 17 percent from 29 percent.

Problems Facing Agricultural Exporters Detailed

93AF0477A Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French
Jan 93 pp 140-141

[Article by Taoufik Ben Brik: "Tunisia's Food Processing Industry in Question"—first paragraph is JEUNE AFRIQUE introduction]

[Text] "When Europe unites, Tunisia will tremble...." an exporter of food products prophesied. The much anticipated and much feared date of 31 December 1992 is a fateful one in the minds of those who make this sector their business.

The agricultural and food products sector holds an important place among Tunisians exports, representing 15.6 percent of the total in 1991, valued at 533 million dinars. More than 77 percent of Tunisia's agricultural and food product exports go to the European Community, bringing into the country no less than 412.9 million dinars.

The 1,500 companies that share this tidy sum among themselves must deal with fierce competition from several Mediterranean countries. Tunisia's exports of farm and food products are almost insignificant when compared with those from Morocco, Turkey, and Cyprus. There are exceptions, however: olive oil, dates, certain seafoods, and to a lesser extent, citrus fruits and wine. According to a comparative study conducted by the Center for the Promotion of Exports (Cepex), of 67 products studied, dates and spices were the only products for which Tunisia's market share exceeded those of the three countries mentioned above.

To give an example, Tunisia's share of the world market in mandarin oranges and clementines [tangerines] is almost nonexistent. It represents a mere 14 percent of the value of Cyprus' exports, 2.5 percent of Turkey's exports, and 0.2 percent of Morocco's exports. Morocco alone accounts for 14 percent of the world's total exports of clementines.

What is the cause of such a poor showing? Are Tunisians unskilled at exporting? "That is a very valid question. Particularly in view of the fact that at a time of good harvests (dates, olive oil, citrus fruits, wines, etc.), our exporters are finding it more and more difficult to get their usual markets to take all that they have to offer," commented the progovernmental newspaper LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in its 8 December 1992 issue.

What is the problem? The only plausible explanation is that Tunisia still lacks a coherent agricultural policy and a dynamic marketing strategy. As a consequence, to the farmer, the prospect of an abundant harvest means numerous hurdles to overcome, chief among them the difficulty of finding farm workers. Fewer and fewer

people are willing to pick crops—a paradox in a country where unemployment is running high. Why? "The pay is poor. Even the most generous employers offer no more than 100 dinars a month. People refuse to work for so little pay, even in less demanding jobs," said a farm worker.

Transportation in Tunisia is another hurdle. While the roads function well for local traffic, they are still unsuited to heavy vehicles traveling long distances. Traversing a large city or driving along narrow, congested roads—where roads exist—is a nightmare for truck drivers.

More serious still, the technological backwardness of the farming sector and the shortage of cold storage and warehousing facilities place Tunisian exporters at a considerable disadvantage.

The glaring weakness, however, is that crop yields are shrinking. The aging of orange groves in the Cap Bon region (the northeast) explains to a large extent the drop in exports of oranges from 54,000 metric tons in 1986-87 to 42,000 in 1987-88 and from 29,000 in 1989-90 to only 25,600 metric tons in 1990-91. Another example of the same problem: In a quarter of a century, from 1965 to 1991, the land area planted in wine grapes has dwindled from 45,000 to 22,000 hectares and wine production has fallen from 1.8 million hectoliters to 360,000! As a result, average annual exports have gone from 482,000 hectoliters to only 267,000.

On top of all this, Tunisian exporters make no effort to prospect new markets. It is possible to find twenty exporters "fighting each other tooth and nail" over one contract. In fact, some exporters invade foreign markets with prices bordering on dumping.

Worse still, few attempts are being made to diversify the market for Tunisian food products to include African countries, for example. Before they take that step, however, Tunisian exporters must first settle the air freight problem. Getting their products loaded onto a plane is a matter of luck, to some extent. Air freight, on which 80 percent of exports depend, is a problem for several reasons. Available cargo space falls well short of the country's actual needs. Tunisair has not increased its flights to any significant degree even though the volume of trade has clearly risen. This shortage of space means that shipments have to be pared down or divided into lots.

Every day at Tunis-Carthage airport, merchandise is left behind, whether space was booked in advance or not. In addition, problems invariably arise during verification, registration, and even booking, primarily due to delays in the transmission of basic documents. In short, goods move sluggishly at the airport. Moreover, there is a shortage of forklifts and cold storage space is limited. Warehouses are overcrowded with goods and security is not entirely guaranteed. The public authorities' only reply is to argue that, "airplanes are not cargo planes! Their first priority is to carry passengers and there is very

little space for freight. Moreover, the exporters are not well organized. They often arrive at the airport in a panic, demanding that their goods be loaded immediately."

In a related matter, public officials say the government has consistently had difficulty in gathering precise information on the potential demand for air freight. Only 125 exporters out of the 1,600 listed in the economic yearbook have returned the questionnaire evaluating the current state of the sector.

Flexible Regulations Advocated for Maritime Commerce Professions

93AF0479A Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE
in French 24 Feb 93 p 2

[Article by Mohamed Habib Samet, Freight Forwarder: "Maritime Freight, Forwarding Agents, and Economic Development: A Partnership To Straighten Things Out"]

[Text] For several years, port and maritime business operators have been calling for a revision of the regulations governing the maritime professions.

The multiplicity of job categories, the changes and developments that have modified one profession after another, the retraining made necessary by the increasingly exacting demands of the international economic environment as well as other factors have raised the need to update the regulations to allow for greater flexibility, stimulation, and innovation, all of which are qualities that determine the ability to compete in the world of trade.

Short of listing them all exhaustively, the maritime professions include the ship operator, the ship consignee, the maritime broker, the forwarding agent or freight forwarder, the transport commissioner, chartering, lightering and cartage, resupplying and refueling, rescue and underwater operations, ship classification, tug boat operations, mooring, average surveying, TIR [international road transport], warehousing, multimodal transport, etc.

The Code of Maritime Commerce defines a number of these activities (ship operator, shipper, ship consignee, cargo consignee, lighter operator, and average surveyor.)

Certain other activities not defined by the Code of Maritime Commerce are regulated by the Advisory Commission for Licensing (tug boat operations, resupplying and refueling, rescue operations, etc.)

Activities not defined by either organization include the work of freight forwarders, the consolidation and unitizing of cargo, TIR, and multimodal transportation.

The top officials of the merchant marine have undertaken the task of studying the updating of regulations within the commissions.

The Work of Freight Forwarders

A proposed regulation covering the activities of freight forwarders was recently made available to the members of that profession, a majority of whom expressed displeasure with the rigid terms of the draft.

According to the commonly accepted definition of his responsibilities, a forwarder is an agent who acts at the behest of and on behalf of his principals and executes the legal and physical processes entailed in the passage of goods from one mode of transportation to another.

As one who contracts to render services as opposed to specific results, the forwarder is answerable solely for his own errors.

The section of the proposed regulation that caused apprehension and tension is the article stipulating that freight forwarders may not concurrently serve as agents of carriers.

It is necessary to explain the pragmatic aspects of the profession of the forwarder.

Forwarders must hold a license from the customs commissioner in order to practice their trade. The license is obtained from the Ministry of Finance.

In the 1970's, the activities of a number of forwarders were confined essentially to customs formalities. This was profitable work at that time, given the complexity of customs operations and the low level of competition that existed.

The past decade saw a rapid expansion in the profession (some 200 forwarders). The profitability of customs operations declined markedly, placing a number of agents in a precarious financial position as they also had to contend with client demands for better services, longer delays in the collection of payments and a substantial credit requirement to cover customs duties and fees.

Diversification of activities was a last resort that raised the profession's standards and guaranteed its survival.

Need anyone be reminded that the lifting of borders inside the EEC threatens to eliminate 15,000 jobs related to customs operations?

In the realm of international transport, the era of specialization is over.

Ship operators no longer confine their activities exclusively to maritime crossings as steadily falling freight prices (due to the slower growth of trade) barely cover their operating costs, which continue to grow, much less the modernization of equipment that entails costs and interest rates that discourage any inclination to undertake such a project.

In this context, the freight forwarder of today is drawn to clearly profitable activities: road transport, goods handling, warehousing, representation of foreign interests, and the subcontracting of various activities related to the conveyance of goods.

A growing number of them have also branched out into the consignment of ships, lightering and cartage, road transport, average surveyor, etc.

In fact, the diversification of activities has intensified with the expansion of the representative's portfolio, which is likely to hasten the internationalization of the profession.

The reasoning of the merchant marine in prohibiting freight forwarders from concurrently working as carrier agents is based solely on the legal argument that it is impossible to serve simultaneously the interests of the client (the importer or exporter) and those of the carrier, particularly in view of the fact that the forwarder does not contract to produce specific results.

The merchant marine hopes to pave the way for multi-dimensional forwarders to become multimodal transport operators, a profession that is primarily dominated by foreign operators.

The international economic environment characterized by the diversification of activities, a trend toward consolidation for the sake of economies of scale (representations, subsidiaries, regroupings, mergers), and job shifts dictated by efficiency have given rise to large-scale professionals who have shaped the distribution chain to their liking, both upstream and downstream.

In Search of Flexible Legislation

It is impossible to forge a new breed of more competitive entrepreneurs without constantly adapting the legal, economic, and social arsenal to the broader trends in the international environment.

To set limits on the profession of forwarder through regulation is, in the end, to return the profession to its original profile. It will eventually asphyxiate the profession and increase our dependence on foreign operators.

The bitter truth is that most of our professionals—forwarders, ship consignees, lighter operators, TIR transporters, and others—lack the scale to stand up to international competition and their energies are scattered because they have relatively limited resources (investments, human resources, etc.)

It would be wiser and more reasonable to opt instead for flexible legislation offering various tax and financial incentives, which would have the effect of enhancing the services offered by the various professions that form the backbone of our foreign trade relations. Incentives are needed to stimulate the following:

- consolidation in its various forms;
- diversification of activities;

- investments in equipment and infrastructure;
- the hiring of managers;
- training and professional improvement programs;
- operations abroad.

TIR activity, which has been attracting considerable attention from Tunisian operators, cannot be overlooked.

Finding the Right Measure of Partnership

A delegation of Tunisian professionals visited Marseille from 20 to 23 January under the sponsorship of the Ministry of Transportation, in collaboration with UTICA [Tunisian Union for Industry, Trade, and Handicrafts] and the Tunis Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

An agreement was recently signed between the chambers of commerce and industry of Tunis and Marseille-Provence. The agreement has three vital aims: the creation of joint companies, swap arrangements, and subsidiaries; technology transfer; and professional training.

For 1993, the sum of 500 million (Beregovoy line of credit) has been made available to Tunisian and French operators.

It cannot be denied that partnership is the foundation for greater integration in the distribution chain. TIR operations could not succeed without a permanent presence at both ends of the chain.

But even though partnership is indispensable, it will not be beneficial to Tunisian operators and to the Tunisian economy unless the right measure is achieved through carefully-concerted planning.

It goes without saying that in the present context, our foreign partner has an undeniable superiority. It will be no easy matter to work counter to that state of affairs in order to achieve equity and bring both sides into balance.

Our operators work with a shortage of good equipment, human resources, markets, etc. Consequently, it would be futile at present to attempt to divide the business equitably between the two parties, unless the flow of trade is brought to a standstill.

Before the partnership is launched, however, specialized national entities are to be established with the purpose of raising professional standards. Such entities will be involved in the following areas:

- investments (selection of equipment, standards, suppliers, maintenance);
- financing (guarantees, credit, various rebates, etc.);
- distribution networks (site selection for business set-up, authorizations of business set-up and related costs, and activity-related services);
- persuading national users (shippers, exporters, and importers) to opt for terms favoring Tunisian operators; and

- sound management practices in the following areas:
 - monitoring units of freight and planning the use of available resources
 - rigorous compliance with contractual obligations (quality of service, time frames, value added to products, preservation of the right to petition)
 - better communication with prospective clients so as to tailor available services to a client's particular needs and to inform clients of new opportunities.

It is precisely by creating support entities that we can hope to bring about the birth of strong Tunisian companies. In that context, partnership can equitably guarantee the interests of both parties.

In the opposite scenario, however, the overeagerness of business operators to rush headlong into partnership arrangements in all spheres would inevitably make our trade more dependent on foreign operators. We would eventually be confined to subcontracted activities.

Law No. 72-38 encouraging foreign investment is, in our minds, a benchmark that cannot be ignored.

It should be evident that it is time we clarified our partnership options by developing a long-term strategy.

REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Al-Bid on Relations With Oman, Elections

93AE0459B London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
9 Apr 93 pp 1,4

[Article by Husayn 'Abd-al-Ghani: "Al-Bid: Agreement With Oman on Withdrawals and Opening Borders; Underlines YSP's Adherence to Outcome of Yemeni Elections"]

[Text] Muscat—At a press conference he held yesterday at the conclusion of his visit to the Sultanate of Oman, 'Ali Salim al-Bid, the Yemeni Presidential Council vice chairman, asserted that the YSP [Yemeni Socialist Party] (in which he holds the post of secretary general) will abide by the outcome of the general election, which will be held in Yemen on 27 April, "whatever the results are."

The Yemeni official added that his talks with Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id have led to agreement on numerous "steps and measures in the area of implementing the border treaty concluded between the countries on 1 October 1992, such as implementing withdrawals, delimiting border markers on which the two sides have agreed, and opening the border and the crossing points."

Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, the Omani minister of state for foreign affairs, also asserted at a press conference he held in Muscat yesterday at the conclusion of Yemeni vice chairman's visit that the Sultanate of Oman

has ended its border problems with all its neighboring, stressing in this regard that there is no any border problem with the UAE.

Bin-'Abdallah expressed the opinion that "it is not time yet to restore political relations with Baghdad." But he noted that the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] member states are in agreement on clinging to Iraq's unity and to the integrity of its territories and people.

Al-Bid expressed the opinion that the border treaty concluded between Yemen and the Sultanate of Oman is the key to bilateral relations and that it has reassured everybody, thus opening the door for discussing "our issues without reservation and for working to develop the relations in the various fields."

The Yemeni Presidential Council vice chairman, who talked about the "congruence of ideas and of viewpoints" with Sultan Qabus and Omani officials, said: "The emphasis in bilateral relations has been put on moving the border treaty to the sphere of actual implementation, on building highways, opening crossing points between the two countries, facilitating the movement of citizens, and exerting joint efforts to develop trade exchange and to create very normal conditions between the two countries." It has also been agreed to "withdraw forces in accordance with the treaty and to return them to their positions on the basis of this basis and on the basis of the treaty."

Regarding other border issues concerning Yemen, al-Bid emphasized that the "relations with the brothers in Saudi Arabia are historical relations. The Yemeni leadership has devoted attention to these relations from the outset. The first proclamation issued by the unity government stressed Yemen's readiness to discuss the border issue with a fraternal spirit and the spirit of looking for a solution."

Al-Bid expressed the belief that "efforts are being made to continue discussing this issue. We have a technical committee from the two countries which meets according to a certain schedule and there are official contacts with Saudi Arabia at the highest levels. We feel that there is progress and we hope that these efforts will continue and that we will submit everything for discussion with the spirit of looking for solutions." He has expressed his "optimism" over the negotiations and contacts that have taken place, noting that "some issues require patience and work. Goodwill exists, and there is progress. We exchange the same good feelings."

In another respect and in response to a question by AL-HAYAH on the difficulties which will emanate from the failure of Yemen's two ruling parties to merge before the general election and on how much this threatens their chances to win this election, al-Bid said: "As a socialist party, we are committed to what we have declared and what we have pledged to the Yemeni people. We will abide by any results produced by this election, regardless of what they are."

Al-Bid acknowledged the presence of differences and difficulties, whether between his party and the GPC [General People's Congress], which is led by President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, or within the YSP itself, saying, "Differences are a very normal thing. I hope that we in the Yemeni parties will accept them, will not conceal them, and will call them by their names. We have emerged from our experiment with this conclusion, namely to accept differences and disagreements, even platforms."

He expressed the belief that "these [different] opinions pave the way for future development and bolster Yemen's democratic course, which is new and young and which should accept some difficulties." Al-Bid emphasized that dialogue with the GPC goes on in order to develop a more advanced formula for relations between the two parties.

Al-Bid gave the press conference an impression which he reaffirmed later to the Omani foreign minister, namely that Yemen's two ruling parties are in agreement on continuing to rule, with other parties, in the post-election period, that because of its special circumstances, Yemen cannot be ruled by one party, and that "even if the YSP wins a majority in the elections, it will not rule by itself. The GPC holds the same opinion."

Aden Governorate Receives 400 Candidates

93AE0458B London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 2 Apr 93 p 4

[Article by Iqbal 'Ali 'Abdallah]

[Text] Aden—Extraordinary security measures are being taken these days, particularly in the electorates in major towns, which are receiving applications for candidature from political party representatives and independent personalities in the electoral battle for the first elected parliament in the country since it united on 22 May 1990.

AL-HAYAH learned from security sources in the province that "these measures are preventive for fear of disturbances taking place during the process of registering candidates and during the election day scheduled for 27 April. The sources pointed out that "the city of Aden has already witnessed acts violence, which were then put down, when the first stage of parliamentary elections was held at the beginning of February in some registration centers.

Moreover, sources of the committee supervising the elections in the city said that the number of applicants for candidacy for the new House of Representatives membership has exceeded 400 candidates as of two days ago. This number is expected to increase in the remaining few days before the 6 April deadline for receiving applications. After this deadline, election campaigning by the candidates will begin.

The committee sources said that "the majority of applicants are independents, but some of them are backed by the two major parties."

Political sources expect that "this large number of applicants is expected to weaken the opportunity for the candidates of the two major parties to win a majority sufficient to win them seats in the parliament. It is known that Aden Governorate has only 11 out of a total of 301 parliamentary seats for all the country's electorates.

In Sanaa, according to the weekly AL-THAWRI, which is published by the YSP [Yemeni Socialist Party], Arab diplomats accredited to Yemen "have information indicating that official Iranian and Sudanese quarters are exploiting the stable brotherly relations between Yemen and these two countries in order to perpetrate illegal political actions without the knowledge of the Yemeni authorities concerned. All these actions are directed toward a strategic objective, which is to apply the Iranian-Sudanese model through exporting the Islamic revolution to the Yemen."

The paper quoted the Arab diplomats whose names or the countries they represent it did not disclose as saying that "military trainings involving Yemeni and Arab fundamentalists and extremists are being carried out inside Yemen and outside it under the supervision of Iranian, Sudanese, Arab and foreign experts. The paper said the diplomats have expressed their concern toward what they described as "suspect" Iranian-Sudanese activities during a meeting they held with some senior Yemeni officials.... The officials who attended the meeting told to the diplomats that, contrary to what they believe, the Yemeni authorities are not unaware of what is taking place in the local and regional arena.

Fugitive Representative Requests Nomination

93AE0459E London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 2 Apr 93 p 5

[Article: "Fugitive Yemeni Deputy Applies for Nomination"]

[Text] Sanaa—Yemeni Deputy Sultan al-Sami'i has applied to the Supreme Election Committee chairman to run as candidate in the forthcoming Yemeni election because he has not been able to get to the office of the 40th district committee in Ta'izz Governorate because of the heavy presence of security forces there and because he fears for his life as a result of the death of two military police members and the wounding of three others in a clash between his guards and the security forces.

The nomination request came in a message to the committee chairman because Deputy al-Sami'i is a fugitive hiding in an undetermined place in Yemen and because the security agencies continue to look for him. In his nomination request, al-Sami'i said that the central security forces, the 3rd Brigade, and Khalid Camp have

received orders to "fire at my person," and he emphasized that his position is legally sound.

New Versus Old Make Election Results Unpredictable

93AE0459D London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
2 Apr 93 p 5

[Article by Hamud Munassar: "Overlapping Political Pluralism and Traditionalism Create Ambiguity; Election Is Opportunity to End Power Sharing in Yemen"]

[Text] Sanaa—The campaign for Yemen's general parliamentary election, scheduled to be held on 27 April 1993, has begun and the political environment's temperature has risen. While the names of those wishing to run for election are being registered, the two ruling parties, (GPC [General People's Congress] and YSP [Yemeni Socialist Party]), have rushed in the past few days to declare their election platforms and to approve their candidate slates within the context of open competition between the two parties, excluding some electoral districts where coordination on candidates is likely, according to assertions by both parties' sources.

The YSP has formed a committee from six of its Political Bureau members to coordinate with other parties, including the GPC, in some districts. The latter coordinates, in turn, with the Grouping for Reform and with the Ba'th Party. The opposition parties have shown willingness to coordinate with either ruling party in the election out of their eagerness to attain the maximum degree of honesty and freedom in the balloting process and to spare the country any problems or tensions that could emanate during the election propaganda period.

On 27 March 1993, the YSP and GPC signed a joint political action charter and urged the other political parties and organizations to follow their example and sign the charter which includes a number of common denominators and rules that regulate the parties' activity in a way that accomplishes national concord among the country's various political forces.

Analysts see in the GPC's and YSP's signing of the political action charter a step which reaffirms postponement of the two parties' "merger" in a single political organization. This idea has evoked numerous debates and conversations recently.

Observers see in conclusion of the political action charter a logical and realistic solution to maintaining the unity of each of the two ruling parties while, at the same time, showing flexibility toward the country's other parties in a way that makes it possible to establish general coordination among the various political forces within the context of a competitive election campaign and without turning away or abolishing the parties that participate effectively.

This step was a surprise that the other Yemeni parties had expected of the YSP and GPC, even though other

surprises are expected and are likely to be announced by the two parties in the next few days prior to the election. These surprises include seeing the two parties register large numbers of their candidates in a competitive manner and then withdraw the largest number of candidates at the last moment while keeping the names of the real candidates already agreed upon and having these candidates run on a single slate. Some circles close to the two parties are reluctant to reaffirm this option and find it likely that the two ruling parties will support the largest number of independent candidates, especially since expectations based on public opinion and voter tendencies to date estimate that voting will depend on candidates' names, not on party platforms, and that votes will not be in the interest of certain parties.

Whatever the expectations and possibilities accompanying the preparations for the forthcoming voting day, Yemen is preparing these days to wage the first general parliamentary election under the canopy of unity and of party and political pluralism at a time when it is confronted with a number of political, economic, and social challenges. This is why all political and social forces and all parties, both ruling parties and nonruling parties, view the forthcoming election as a national wager for whose success everybody is responsible, considering that the election is a basic step and an essential process on the path of rearranging the country's general conditions and correcting the flaws that have touched the various aspects of Yemeni life during the transitional period. It is also hoped, if the election is conducted peacefully, democratically, freely, and honestly, that the first benefit the election produces will be, according to the official and opposition circles, an end to the phenomenon of power-sharing and the expansion of political participation in accordance with new legislative bases that make all forces responsible, that curtail the phenomenon of disorder, and that restore unity of the political will.

The truth is that while putting their bet on the election, Yemenis do not find it embarrassing to express their current reality and to talk of the complex makeup of the present Yemeni society where traditional pluralism, especially tribal pluralism, is combined with the recently introduced party and political pluralism.

Under the canopy of this diverse pluralism and of the overlapping of the old and the new in the current Yemeni reality, it is difficult to speculate on the outcome of the election or to subjugate this outcome to political and partisan factors solely because social factors, especially traditional social factors, are the most decisive factors that one is supposed to take into consideration, considering that in Yemen, the tribe continues to have an effective impact and a strong influence. There is, moreover, the manifestation of independence with which many of those who plan to run for election are surrounding themselves, even party candidates and candidates who have the support of parties.

Besides, the tribes themselves, realizing that legitimacy has become available under the canopy of the democracy

of party pluralism, have found themselves compelled to work under a party umbrella or have proclaimed their own parties, injecting these parties with elements from outside the tribe so that they would not be called tribal parties. In other cases, tribes have allied themselves with political parties within the framework of new organizations, as in the case of the Grouping for Reform, which is headed by Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar, the paramount chief of the Hashid tribes who had been rejecting parties absolutely. But, according to what he once told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, when he found that the "country's government would be monopolized by the YSP and the GPC," he was compelled to create the Yemeni Grouping for Reform in alliance with ulema and the Muslim Brotherhood.

Some analysts interpret the tribes' adoption of the party pattern of action, even though they are not convinced of partisanship, as an endeavor to avoid being stigmatized with narrow "tribalism," clannishness, provincialism, or separatism at a time when Yemeni unity is still young and fragile and when all allege that they are for unity to the end of the line.

Official and unofficial campaigns are still at their peak and calls continue to be issued for confronting whatever is likely to undermine unity or to lead to adopting tribal, provincial, or familial calls. But despite the legitimacy of party and political pluralism, Yemen has witnessed in the transitional period an extraordinary revival of tribal, provincial, and sectarian tendencies within the context of the political struggle that has taken place between the two partners in power, i.e. the GPC and the YSP, or within the context of other party and political conflicts.

Moreover, the party phenomenon itself has not escaped the fragmentation and internal splits. This phenomenon has touched most parties and political forces, including the GPC and the YSP.

With the approaching election date, all these [break-away] endeavors have become, in the public's eyes, blots disgracing those who engaged in them, be they from the extreme right to the extreme left. This is because perils of emanating from severe conflicts posed a threat to Yemen's stability and unity at the end of last year. The true political parties and organizations seem to be more legitimate now, despite the influential social forces' adherence to their tribal or clan affiliation.

A look at this makeup makes it clear that Yemen's election will take place over a vast area of political and social competition between the Yemeni society's overlapping forces. Foremost among these forces are the political parties and organizations, [labor] organizations and unions, the tribe, and then independent forces.

The competition will be for the seats of 301 electoral districts. It is expected that the three main parties—the GPC, YSP, and the Yemeni Grouping for Reform—will nominate candidates in all or most of the districts. The YSP and the GPC have already approved the names of

their candidates to most of the districts, and they are coordinating on the remaining candidates.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that by the end of March, the Yemeni Grouping for Reform had approved the names of nearly 50 percent of its candidates and that it is now engaged in concerted internal consultations to complete approving the names of the remaining candidates through coordination among its various forces, as well as coordination with the Ba'th Party and the GPC regarding candidates for certain districts.

Because of the ambiguity that has engulfed the Yemeni political arena and of the unclear positions and relations among various parties, especially between the GPC and the YSP, in the recent period, these relations have been repeatedly subjected to debates in the light of numerous options, the highest of which is the option of merger and the lowest is the option of competition. Because of the lack of initiative on the part of the opposition parties, it has been difficult to define the party map and the alliances which will emerge at election time. Moreover, the GPC and the YSP have finally disclosed that their merger is faltering and that they are inclined toward the option of honorable competition in the election, with partial coordination in some districts, now that the GPC has rejected the option of a bilateral alliance with the YSP. Light can be shed now, almost certainly, on the dimensions of the party map and on the number of parties that will participate in the election. It is also possible to try to determine the size, influence, and popularity of each of these parties, and the rhetoric each of their platforms will adopt. One should keep in mind that during the transitional period, numerous parties, nearly 40 altogether, emerged in Yemen and that utter confusion has prevailed, thus making it difficult to make a distinction between a real party, a splinter party, or an imaginary party.

Similar or repeated have names surfaced. There is a story that is almost funny in this connection. But according to what is revealed by the popular arena and by the effects of true action, it can be emphasized that the statement saying that there are 40 parties in Yemen contradicts the facts on the real ground for many reasons, including the reason that pluralism is new in Yemen. The birth of parties in the preceding period has been subject mainly to individual disposition and to some people's love of leadership and of showing off. Moreover, the justifications for the splits and divisions within some parties have been personal or financial mainly. Or it is that these splits and divisions were schemed by the two ruling parties, YSP and GPC, to weaken and scatter the opposition parties. Moreover, no true evaluation of the parties has been made to date in light of the required constitutional and legal conditions. Besides, the parties law has not been applied.

This issue represents the most significant problem facing the Yemeni parties. The majority of the membership of these parties has not practiced democracy and elections, including membership of the YSP, GPC, the Reform

Grouping, the Ba'th, and the Nasirite Unionist Organization. These five parties are called the "main parties." But none of their current leaders are elected and none of them has convened its general congress. The same applies to the other parties, excluding the League of Yemeni Citizens Party (Ra'y) and the Yemeni Unionist Grouping. They are two "mid-size parties" that have held their general congresses and elected their current leaders.

Moreover, none of the Yemeni parties has been able to define clearly the social forces it represents and none of them has presented a political program that underlines its intellectual and ideological identity, its action mechanisms, and its visions of the general national, pan-Arab, and international issues. Furthermore, most of the political programs and draft programs of the parties which have surfaced recently seem so similar that they are almost identical. This confirms that it is possible that voters will vote for individuals, not for programs or for parties.

No matter how similar some programs seem to be, no matter that some parties have no programs, and despite the overlapping party pluralism and tribal pluralism, it is possible to draw a map of the proclaimed Yemeni parties existing in the arena, even if these parties represent individuals or groups and reflect the love of leadership and of showing off. It is also possible to divide these parties into three different levels according to certain factors and then divide each level horizontally according to the expected coalitions and alliances.

Convocation of the national congress in mid-September 1992 and of the congress of popular parties and organizations in the first half of October 1992 constituted the first step toward separating the Yemeni political parties and forces and dividing them into ruling parties and nonruling parties. The national congress represented a framework for the nonruling parties that maintain good relations with the YSP, whereas the congress of popular organizations and parties represented a framework of some ruling parties or parties which have influence in the government. This congress included the GPC, the Yemeni Grouping for Reform, the Ba'th Party, and a number of small parties that are close to or allied with these parties.

When it was decided to adopt the principle of power sharing between the GPC and the YSP, the GPC involved the Yemeni Grouping for Reform, represented by some elements of the Muslim Brotherhood, and the Ba'th Party in some ministerial positions in the government which had been allotted for the GPC whereas the YSP didn't involve any of the political forces allied with it, especially the Nasirites who have repeatedly expressed their displeasure with this approach to the YSP.

In the distribution of ministerial portfolios allotted to it, the YSP has been content to let its various generations, beginning with the Salimayn faction and ending with the

collective leadership which emerged in wake of the 13 January 1986 events, be represented in the ministerial portfolios.

It is expected that the true dimensions of the Yemeni parties will emerge in the coming weeks. Some of these parties may merge with others, especially with the big main parties, led by the GPC and YSP.

The categorization of Yemeni parties is subject to traditional considerations attributable to Yemen's historical legacy and to the accumulated problems of the transitional period, which have affected the relations between the parties and each party's strategic interests, as well as the intellectual and ideological dimensions that govern a party's structure and its mentality. Despite the party names declared in the preceding period, exceeding 40 in number, the actual parties existing in the arena and engaged in noticeable activity do not exceed 20 in number, including five main parties and three medium parties, namely the League Party, al-Haqq Party, and the Yemeni Unionist Grouping. The others are small parties whose future is engulfed in uncertainty, especially in the post-election period.

Supreme Election Committee To Air All Platforms

93AE0459C London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
2 Apr 93 p 5

[Article by Hamud Munassar in Sanaa and Lutfi Shat-arah in Aden: "Regulation of Official Media's Use in Yemeni Election; Two Ruling Parties Continue Coordination Efforts; Independents Show Greater Interest in Running for Election"]

[Text] The Yemeni Supreme Election Committee yesterday urged every political party and organization wishing to take advantage of the committee decision on presenting election platforms through the official media to supply it with five copies of its platform and to nominate two of its members to present the platform on radio or television. The committee has issued a similar invitation to candidates registered with district election committees to supply copies of their election cards, platforms, and propaganda materials and to submit a completed application to use the official media by 11 April 1993.

'Abd-al-Malik al-Mikhlaflafi has said that nomination committees have received requests from nearly 12 candidates in some districts, noting that the largest number of candidates belong to the independent sector. Al-Mikhlaflafi also pointed out that to be entitled to use the official media, a party has to have candidates in 15 electoral districts at least.

Al-Mikhlaflafi also said that a number of foreign press delegations have arrived in Yemen, in addition to representatives of institutions concerned with democracy. He expected that more delegations will follow. Meanwhile, UNESCO [United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization] has announced that it

will hold a seminar in Sanaa from 11-13 April 1993 on "democratic women and modernization" and that a number of Yemeni and Arab women researchers and women representatives of international organizations will participate in the seminar.

In a related development, informed sources have told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that 'Ali 'Abbad al-Hudayni and Naji Muhsin al-Halqabi, members of the YSP [Yemeni Socialist Party] Central Committee, have given up their nomination as party candidates in favor of young figures and new blood, thus swerving from the rule of the nomination of well-known figures.

Even though the decision on merging the two ruling parties, the GPC [General People's Congress] and YSP, has been postponed until after the election, the two parties have formed a committee to carry on with the dialogue and to coordinate between them. This committee is headed by 'Ali Salim al-Bid, the GPC assistant secretary general [title as published], and has Salim Salih Muhammad and Dr. Yasin Sa'id Nu'man as members representing the YSP, and Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani, 'Abd-al-Salam al-'Ansi, and Yahya al-Mutawakkil as members representing the GPC.

Some sources have emphasized that the fact that the two parties have signed a political action charter is tantamount to an initiative urging the other parties to develop a formula that underlines abidance by the election outcome and that spares the country the perils of struggle for power, considering that the armed forces have not been united yet.

Coalition Government Intended After Elections

93AE0458C London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 2 Apr 93
pp 1, 4

[Article by Iqbal 'Ali 'Abdallah]

[Text] Sanaa, Aden—In light of the two principal parties signing the pact between them, thus paving the way for the general elections scheduled to take place on 27 April, political sources in Sanaa expect the General People's Congress [GPC] to win the largest number of seats in the new House of Representatives. However, these sources said this does not mean that the other partner in the government, the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP], will leave the government. After the elections, it is their [GPC's and YSP's] intention to form a "national coalition government in which the major parties will participate in order to ensure a peaceful shift to the new stage in the country's history."

Relations between the two ruling parties witnessed several crises in the past period, and prolonged talks took place between them aimed at developing these relations and ending the crisis situation. It was suggested at the negotiating table to merge the two parties into one. Several proposals were put forward, but the dialogue concerning the merger has been postponed until after the elections.

Jarallah 'Umar, member of the YSP Political Bureau, said that his party and the GPC have recently reached "a degree of certainty concerning the possible level of relations between them by agreeing on coordination of the elections wherever that may be possible."

In an article titled "Democracy is the Solution" in the newspaper AL-THAWRI, 'Umar said that "the short period of time for registering the candidates' names for the coming round of elections might not enable full coordination, but the mere public agreement (reference to the political action plan between the two parties) constitutes in itself an extremely important event, because it reflects the common will of the two partners to work together in order to create an atmosphere suitable for the elections to be carried out in conditions of stability and security."

He considered the agreement between the two parties as "a political speech addressed to the political parties and forces, characterized by openness and flexibility. It is also a reaffirmation of the pledge to forge ahead on the road to democracy right up to its ceiling, and to open wider vistas for cooperation between the various political forces and trends in order to modernize the country and build the state of order and law."

'Abd-al-Wahhab al-'Ansi, secretary general of the Yemeni Grouping for Reform [YGR], (the opposition party headed by Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar) said that the YGR election program "was prepared earlier, before it was announced in November of last year that the elections would be postponed and rescheduled for 27 April this year. He said that "the electoral program for reform will be announced in the next few days." In a statement to AL-HAYAH in Aden, he said that the YGR has "included in its electoral program certain priorities that were supposed to be among the tasks of the transitional period during which the GPC and the YSP shared power. These include the question over-employment that resulted from power-sharing arrangements beyond any standard, which has led to the administrative machinery becoming flabby. There is also the question of security, which the two ruling parties used as a means of political blackmail." He said that the YGR has prepared a list of its candidates who will run in the elections in all 301 constituencies." But, he added, the YGR candidates will withdraw from the constituencies where it is obvious that other candidates, whether from other parties or independents, are more acceptable." He said that the YGR looks at an elected House of Representatives from the standpoint of looking for the personalities that are capable of being effective in the coming stage, and far from the narrow partisan outlook that looks for statistics and resorts to pretensions in the elections, without any regard to the capable personalities. We believe that no party, even if it may win the majority of seats, will be capable of shouldering the country's responsibilities alone."

Speaking about his expectations regarding the elections, he said: "I believe that they are going to be successful,

since this is the only way out of the crises and difficulties from which the country is suffering."

Speaking about the action plan between the parties and organizations that the two ruling parties signed last Tuesday, al-Ansi said: "We are not bound to sign this pact, particularly since the two ruling parties did not accept the views and observations the other parties put forward during the month of Ramadan last year, when the parties then were asked to discuss the pact as one of the series of proposed agreements between the two parties in power. The parties' response then was that they should be given the opportunity to express their views on the points of agreement and disagreement, but the two parties then dodged the issue. Consequently, the YGR, the Ba'th Party, and the Nasirite Unionist Party prepared a draft political action plan that was signed by the parties and organizations that attended the conference of parties and mass organizations that was held last October.

He added: "However, we would like to point out that if the two ruling parties submit their political action plan as a plan open to amendment and to give and take, then we will be ready to discuss it. And if they insist that their opinion is final, then we will reserve our right to our own views, particularly since signing this plan is voluntary."

On the other hand the newspaper AL-MITHAQ, which is an organ of the GPC, said the day before yesterday that Qayid Shuwayt 'Ali, head of the YGR branch in Sa'dah province (a northern province) submitted his resigned from the YGR and joined the GPC.

The YGR did not issue any statement that confirmed or denied this report.

Yemeni Grouping for Reform Declares Platform

93AE0451A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 7 Apr 93 p 4

[Text] Sanaa—Under the slogan "We shall reform the situation, apply the shari'ah, and reject secularism," the Yemeni Grouping for Reform [YGR] proclaimed in its election platform, which consists of an introduction, three chapters, and a conclusion.

The YGR, the biggest Yemeni Islamic party, headed by Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar, paramount chief of Hashid tribes, proclaimed that it is "a genuine extension of the Yemeni reform movements in modern times." It said: "Our deteriorating situation can be reformed only by mobilizing sincere collective efforts to which all the people's potentials shall be devoted, beginning with the legislative, judiciary, and executive authorities and ending with all factions of the people." One of the imperatives of the desired reform is true commitment by everybody to God's law and the implementation of its rules. It is to enable the people to choose their leaders. Wisdom calls for accepting a plurality of views, engaging in political rivalry, and streamlining the process of peaceful rotation of assuming power, all of which is to be held in light of unanimously accepted principles.

It also calls for perseverance in working to consolidate the state of institutions, the state of justice, order, and equality."

The statement regards sound and honest parliamentary elections as "the ray of hope for the future. We hope their results will, God willing, bring to an end conflict and tension and will lead to overcoming the obstacles on the path of building a modern Yemeni state...and that these elections will mark the real beginning of overcoming the negative aspects of the transitional period and before it. It is also hoped that the atmosphere will be conducive to removing the remnants of the fragmented situation and its effects, that the Yemenis will be up to the cultural challenge and emerge peacefully from the current crisis, and that the venues of growth, development, and prosperity will be open for them."

The party called on "the sons of the Yemeni people and the free voters to elect devout reformers (the YGR candidates)." It said that it does not claim that it can reform things "overnight," stressing that "we do not wish to win your votes with fruitless oneupmanship and false promises. But we sincerely declare that, God willing, we will through our position in the House of Representatives or outside it and with the help of the YGR leadership, its grass roots, and supporters, do our utmost to uphold right, establish justice, and abide by the people's belief and their Islamic shari'ah, defend the nation, and not compromise its sovereignty, independence, and destinies. We will do all we can to address the problems of the countries and the citizens and preserve the people's gains. With God's help, we will remain advocates of unity, amity, security, and progress. We shall seek to maintain social stability and build a society based on amity, compassion, and cooperation."

The YGR, the fourth Yemeni party to announce its election platform on the eve of the closing date for candidacy for the House of Representatives, asserted that despite its belief in the importance of being represented in the House of Representatives, its work for achieving its objectives will not be dependent upon "the proportion of our presence in the coming House of Representatives or the attitude of others toward the stands we adopt. Rather, our declared stands on the country's major issues—such as the demand for amending the constitution and the basic laws in light of the shari'ah, improving conditions in the provinces that are still suffering under partisan tyranny, the deliberate disregard for demands to close liquor factories, the restoration of rights to their owners, the question of administration corruption, and the misuse of public funds—stem from the principles of our Islamic shari'ah. We are confident that what we call for reflects the conscience of our Islamic people and its firm belief. The realization of this demand will to a great extent ease this people's hardships, alleviate its sufferings, and lessen the difficulties of life in its economic, security, educational, and services aspects."

In Chapter 1 of the electoral program titled "Constants and Priorities," the YGR believes that since Islam is a creed that totally envisions man, life, and the universe, it also encompasses all the other aspects of national life, the foremost of which are:

- National unity is a basic condition for overcoming all the negative effects of backwardness from which our country is suffering. It is a shield against all the enemy conspiracies. It is a vital need in the mobilization of all potentials in order to build a Yemen of belief and wisdom. It is also a barrier against all kinds of racial, sectarian, and regional discrimination.
- The republican regime has come in order to free the Yemeni people from backwardness, stagnation, isolation, subordination, to put an end to tyranny and dominance, and to give the citizen his right to choose his rulers without coercion or oppression.
- Belonging to the Arab and Islamic nation represents the basis of the Yemeni people's cultural identity. This imposes duties on this people to be carried out so that the nation will restore its right and the artificial borders dividing it will be eliminated and its unity will be achieved so as to become the best nation that came into being.
- Freedom is an Islamic principle constituting one of the most important guarantees for the rectification of mistakes, preservation of the rights of the sons of the people, and preventing domination and tyranny by the weak-spirited ones.
- The peaceful rotation of power. This is the best and most ideal way to solve the problems of power and of administering it, as well as to ensure the stability and security of the homeland and protecting its unity. The people's right to choose its rulers is one of the basic principles of the legitimacy of rulers on which the legitimacy of rule in the Islamic regime is found.

Chapter 3 of the program is devoted to foreign policy stresses that the YGR will, on the Arab and Islamic levels, adopt a policy that will "preserve the sovereignty of the Yemeni people, land, and identity. It will energize its role and fulfill its duty in order to become an effective member of the Arab, Islamic, and international community; to strengthen relations with all the Arab and Islamic countries; to seek to purify the atmosphere among the brothers; and to consider the Palestine problem as the problem of all the Arabs and Muslims. It will support the Palestinian people's struggle against the Jewish occupiers; resist all calls that seek to fragment the Arab and Islamic nation along factional lines; stand against sectarianism, regionalism, and fanaticism; and contribute to solving any dispute among Muslims in a peaceful manner."

On the international level the program calls for "respecting the peoples' right to choose their life-styles; ruling regime, and economic system with their own free will; for noninterference in the affairs of others; for peace and coexistence among peoples in the light of common interests; and for the proper selection of people working in the diplomatic corp."

YSP, GPC Sign Political Action Plan

93AE0458A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 3 Apr p 4

[Article by 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Haydari]

[Text] Sanaa—'Abd-al-Salam al-'Ansi, head of the General Department of the General People's Congress [GPC], said that the signing by the two ruling parties, the GPC and the YSP [Yemeni Socialist Party], of "the political action plan is considered as the final stage reached in the dialogue between the two political parties, the partners in unity."

The 22 MAY newspaper asked al-'Ansi whether the signing of the document was a prelude to new steps toward the development of relations between the two partners, he said that "the GPC and the YSP have signed the plan after the formulas of unity, integration, broad alliance, or bilateral alliance met with many obstacles." He said it has become necessary to postpone considering adopting any of these formulas until after the elections.

Al-'Ansi said that signing the political action plan means that the two parties "have opted to fight the elections in an honest contest in light of an existing political document to which both will refer as an arbiter. It will also be an arbiter for all of the political parties and organizations, which it is hoped they too will refer to as an arbiter any time differences of any kind arise."

The GPC general committee member believes that the political action document having been signed, it has "defined for the two political organizations the national principles and the rules of political action and its ethics that are contained in the document." He said that the political action plan is not "a new document because it was laid down and approved more than a year ago. The various parties were then called upon to discuss it during the month of Ramadan's evening gatherings last year.... It was shelved for some time because the two parties were busy looking for a more advanced alternatives and formulas for coordination between them, depending on developments of the political situation."

The newspaper AL-RA'Y, published by the League of the Sons of Yemen, said that 'Abdallah Salam al-Hakimi, member of the higher committee for elections and deputy chairman of the media committee that comes under the higher committee, has resigned in protest against releasing the electoral program on television last Sunday and publishing it in the government newspaper AL-THAWRAH.

The paper quoted al-Hakimi as saying in the memorandum he submitted to the higher committee chairman that such action is contrary to the provisions of the election law and contrary to the rules of election campaigning that have been set out by the higher committee and which provide for a specific period of time be fixed for election campaigning and for maintaining the principle of equality in campaigning opportunities in the official media for all the parties. It added that the

"resignation of al-Hakimi from the media committee is a reaction by the one concerned with supervising organization of the election campaign in the official media."

YSP, GPC Members Run on Independent Ballots

93AE0459A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 9 Apr 93 p 4

[Article by Iqbal 'Ali 'Abdallah: "Members in Two Parties Run for Election as Independents"]

[Text] Aden—Authoritative sources of the two ruling parties in Yemen (the General People's Congress [GPC] and the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP]) have asserted that the fact that "a number of the two parties' leaders will run as independent candidates in the 27 April 1993 elections does not mean that they are in disagreement with the two parties' leaderships or that they will try to criticize and fight their parties in their propaganda campaigns in an effort to gain voters at the expense of the two parties' candidates."

In a telephone conversation with AL-HAYAH in Aden yesterday, these sources added: "Based on their convictions and platforms, the GPC and YSP have opened the door to any of their members who has not been nominated by his party to run for election as an independent if he is confident that he will win votes and provided that he adheres to the discipline of his affiliation with the party and to the party's goals and ethics in the election process."

A number of names of leaders of both ruling parties have appeared on independent slates, most significantly Naji 'Uthman Ahmad (YSP), the governor of Aden, who is running for election in the 21st district (Khawr Maksir). The YSP has nominated Qasim 'Abd-al-Rabb Salih to run as its candidate for the district. As for the GPC, I'tidal Dayriyah is running as an independent for the 22d district (al-Tawahi), whereas the GPC has nominated Husayn 'Abd-al-Karim al-Jawi to run for election in this district.

A number of candidates of other parties in Aden believe that "this is a tactic on the part of the two parties to split the voters' votes and to deprive the other parties of these votes." In interviews with AL-HAYAH, the other parties' candidates said: "This is an exposed maneuver and it will not deceive voters who know the two parties' leaders quite well." These candidates urged the YSP and the GPC to "adhere to the principle of honest competition in the elections, as they have emphasized in their two election platforms."

In a related development, the National Committee for Free Elections, founded last January by the Yemeni Organization for the Defense of Democratic Rights and Liberties, has urged European embassies and the embassies of the United States and Japan in Yemen to "put pressure on the country's authorities so they will accept the principle of national supervision of the elections."

Upcoming Elections Compared With Algeria's

93AE0464A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic

13 Apr 93 p 17

[Article by Wahid 'Abd-al-Majid: "Will Yemen's Elections Repair Damage Done by Algeria's Elections"]

[Text] Yemen's parliamentary elections, which will be held on 27 April 1993, gain great importance that goes beyond Yemen's borders to influence the democratic transformation experiments of other Arab countries. These elections represent the most significant test of the democratic process that has made quite a stride in Yemen since unity was achieved in May 1990, despite the unstable conditions that engulf this process. This test concerns the more sensitive aspect of this process in the Arab world, namely the rotation of power. We have seen how democratic transformation has been blocked in Algeria as a result of the failure in this test. The positions of some leaders of the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front], which swept the first phase of the legislative elections on 17 December 1991, and their refusal to attempt to preserve democracy provided the justification for army intervention and for the destruction of whatever progress had been achieved in the transformation toward democracy.

This is why Yemen's election experiment is important. Depending on this experiment, the Algerian experiment's negative impact on the future development of democracy in the Arab world will either be reinforced or reevaluated. Even though parliamentary elections were held in two other Arab countries last year (Lebanon and Kuwait), these two countries' very special circumstances prevent viewing them as two cases that point the way to the future. Both countries had come out of devastating wars, one a civil-regional war that lasted 15 years (Lebanon) and the other a regional-international war that emanated from Iraq's invasion (Kuwait). These special circumstances also include the nature of the political regime in each of the two countries, considering that Lebanon has known since its independence a special type of democratic regimes founded on so-called conditional consent among balanced (sectarian-political) centers of power. In Lebanon, power is rotated within and on the basis of a certain power distribution framework. Kuwait has experienced democracy on a limited scale since 1962, and this experience has provided a tangible degree of public liberties and made it possible to hold impartial elections, often waged by political and social groups that do not take the form of acknowledged parties, but excluding the possibility of the rotation of power. This is why Lebanon and Kuwait are not included among the pluralistic regimes in the categorization of Arab regimes. The emergence of such pluralistic regimes in Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan, Algeria, and Yemen has been coupled with a democratic transformation process that is restricted by varying degrees.

This transformation, although new, made quick progress in Algeria. It started in the wake of the October 1988

uprising and neared its completion before it collapsed in January 1992. With this collapse, it seems that the democratic transformation in Yemen, as new as it is, is the most advanced. This transformation is tied to the accomplishment of unity in May 1990, and it is what motivates many to display interest in this experiment, not because of its mechanical similarity to the Algerian experiment, considering that they are similar in transformation rates and speed, but because comparative experience indicates that rapid transformation ordinarily harbors an instability that could blow democracy away, especially when it is coupled with deteriorating economic and living conditions. In the science of comparative political systems, it is the belief that stable democracies emanate more often from a slow development process, provided that it is constant and accelerated, than from rapid and rushed transformation or from a revolution that topples a despotic or authoritarian regime.

It is evident that the democratic transformation process in Yemen is suffering from the problem of instability coupled with a severe economic crisis. This is reflected in the proliferation of acts of armed violence, on one hand, and vocal protests to voice people's demands, on the other. Assassinations, assassination attempts, and explosions, plus recurrent economic strikes and riots, have constituted a serious phenomenon in the past two years. Doubts about the chances of continued democratic transformation were heightened when the elections, supposed to take place before the end of the transitional unity period last November, were postponed. But even though these doubts declined when it was decided to hold the elections on a new date (27 April) without any further delay, the future of this transformation continues to be dependent on the manner in which the elections are conducted, on the results they will produce, and on how well the various political parties and forces respect these results.

However, there is cause for a degree of optimism about this experiment, which, it seems, will have a more promising fate than that of the Algerian experiment for two reasons:

First, the numerous centers of political and social power that characterize the Yemeni experiment. This multiplicity is considered an indispensable requirement for the success of democratic development. It is certain that this requirement was not present in the case of Algeria because the erosion of the regime and of its party (the FLN [National Liberation Front]) and the extreme weakness of the other parties and factions vis-a-vis the FIS created a situation that was dominated by a single center of power capable of sweeping the free elections and monopolizing power (or at least the government until the onset of the presidential election). After this election, future democratic development would have depended on how prepared the FIS was to carry on with this development, which was not certain.

Moreover, this requirement is not present in other Arab cases that witness sharp polarization between two centers of power: The existing ruling regime and the Islamic movement. Under the umbrella of this polarization, violence-harboring confrontation becomes most likely, especially in the absence of traditions of dialogue, bargaining, and compromise solutions.

This is why the most important feature distinguishing the Yemeni experiment is the multiplicity of centers of power that obstruct domination by the fundamentalist movement, whose strongest faction is represented by the Yemeni Grouping for Reform. There are two big parties, each of which had monopolized power in one of the two parts of Yemen until the recent past (GPC [General People's Congress] in the north and YSP [Yemeni Socialist Party] in the south). The circumstances of the transitional period of unity have dictated that these two parties share power. But their disagreement and their competition have continued, thus making it impossible for them to merge. They have even failed to agree on an alliance or on full coordination in the elections.

Even though their disagreement has worsened the instability, it is considered positive from the perspective of future democratic development because it has obstructed the emergence of a gigantic party and has, consequently, eliminated the scenario of sharp polarization. The presence of three major competing parties ensures presence of the requirement of multiple centers of power, especially because each party has its tribal base. Thus, political pluralism and tribal pluralism overlap in a manner that, it is hoped, will contribute to the gradual modernization of society. Even though the tribe in Yemen has maintained an effective influence to date, it is compelled now to operate under the party umbrella which provides the tribe with legitimacy, especially since unity's momentum is weakening the tribal call.

Perhaps another (fourth) center of power will emerge if the opposition parties that are enrolled under the umbrella of the Popular Parties and Organizations Congress manage to maintain their coordination with each other and if they avoid the intransigence dictated by electoral competition, especially since each of the three main parties seeks to induce some of this congress' parties to coordinate with it. There are also a number of medium-size parties, such as the Nasirite Unionist Party, the Ba'th Party, the League of Yemeni Citizens Party, al-Haqq [Right] Party, and the Yemeni Unionist Grouping. These parties' presence bolsters multiplicity of the centers of power.

The second reason for the relative optimism about this experiment is the fact that Yemen's two ruling parties seem to be more prepared now than other parties in similar Arab countries to accept the rotation of power. Their leadership has repeatedly expressed its commitment to this aspect, and the two parties have documented this commitment in the political pact that they issued jointly on 28 March 1993. This pact includes a

provision that states: "Democratic political authority can only be based on free elections that reflect a true popular will that ensures political and party pluralism and free opposition and that guarantees the political parties' and organizations' succession to the presidency and to the control of government agencies in a peaceful and constitutional manner." In this pact, the two parties undertake "not to raise any slogans advocating dictatorship and to preserve the democratic civilian character of the government and the complete neutrality of the military, defense, and security establishments." They also undertake "not to resort to violence or to threats in political action, not to use weapons or instigation, and not to make any attempt to attain power with undemocratic means."

If both parties adhere to these commitments, the Yemeni experiment will be able to pass the difficult test it is facing in this period. But before anything else, the two parties have to ensure neutrality of the state agencies in the election process. If this happens under the canopy of the aforementioned centers of power, it is likely that no party will gain an absolute majority that allows it to monopolize power. But it is likely that the two ruling parties together will get such a majority. This may tempt them to carry on with their power-sharing formula as it is or to amend it slightly by including some small parties that are close to each of them in a ruling coalition so as to give the impression that the sphere of the forces participating in power has been expanded. This scenario harbors the danger of sharp polarization because entrenching democratic development to the degree of forming a broad coalition requires some time so that the ghost of polarization can be kept away. Several parties and organizations have actually expressed apprehensions about the possibility that there are hidden agreements between the two ruling parties to work for the perpetuation of the power-sharing formula.

But there is another scenario that harbors its perils, namely to have the votes divided among a large number of parties in a manner that dictates the formation of a coalition that is broader than it should be and that does not have the minimum degree of harmony. Such a scenario is likely to cause the inability to make decisions on major issues and to obstruct or paralyze government action. Thus, such a coalition is likely to become subject to frequent changes in its structure, with the worsened instability such changes could mean. Such a situation could weaken the public's trust in the feasibility of the entire democratic process.

What this signifies is that elections held peacefully and respect for their outcome by everybody represent just one step in the direction of passing the democratic test in Yemen. There are later steps that are no less difficult,

and their responsibility does not fall on the shoulders of the GPC and YSP alone. This is why it is necessary to expand the political pact they have concluded by including all of the parties and organizations in it and by having them pledge to adhere to the democratic mainstays it encompasses, the most important of which prohibit the use of violence and its means and call for adhering to the provisions of the constitution, refraining from raising slogans advocating dictatorship, and avoiding the use of the means of slander and the charge of infidelity. But in Yemen's case, perhaps the most important of these mainstays is prohibiting the use of weapons in political action, especially because weapons are widespread among the tribes and individuals by virtue of society's traditions. The use of these weapons could pose a grave threat to democratic development now.

The step following the elections immediately is supposed to be the convocation of a comprehensive national congress in which all parties and organizations reaffirm their adherence to these mainstays, over which it is difficult to imagine that disagreement will develop. The political pact declared by the two ruling parties constitutes an appropriate framework for this congress, which was impossible to convene last year because the parties disagreed on preparatory and procedural matters as of February 1992. This led to the convocation of three rival congresses over which most of the parties were divided. Thus, the two ruling parties had no option but to declare the political pact and to invite all parties and organizations to join it. This step will constitute a serious test to the parties' credibility and to their belief in democracy, especially the Yemeni Grouping for Reform, the main fundamentalist party which has an election platform that seems to be promising by virtue of the emphasis it puts on the peaceful rotation of power and its acknowledgment that the "nation's right to select its rulers is a main principle of the legitimacy of government in the Islamic system." But this party continues to be required to join the political pact, as Jordan's Islamic movement joined, and even contributed to drafting the national pact that was declared in 1991, asserting the need to "preserve the democratic civilian quality of government." This is also included in the political pact to which Yemen's two ruling parties have committed themselves.

In any case, many Arabs are awaiting the Yemeni election experiment and what will emanate from it, not just because they are concerned with a sisterly country whose future and unity depends on this experiment but also because they are spurred by the hope that this experiment will repair the damage done by Algeria's experiment to the future of democracy in the Arab world.

IRAN

Revolution Uprooted, Bani-Sadr Says

93AS0689A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
17 Feb 93 p 27

[Text] Former President Abolhasan Bani-Sadr is a son of the revolution but a key opponent of what it has led to. Since Shahpur Bakhtiar's assassination in Paris in the summer of 1991, French security agencies have reinforced the guard protecting Bani-Sadr, who has practically been living in hiding. AL-MAJALLAH met with him and asked his opinion on the revolution 14 years after its inception.

[AL-MAJALLAH] What remains of the teachings and ideas of the leader of the Iranian revolution, Khomeyni, 14 years after the revolution began and four years after Khomeyni's death?

[Bani-Sadr] The Iranian revolution that began in 1979 and swept away the shah's regime was not, as is maintained, stamped with Khomeyni's ideas and teachings. When Khomeyni arrived in France seeking asylum, he found Iranian opposition leaders living there. They received him, cooperated with him, and helped in his media and diplomatic war against the shah. We oppositionists used to prepare Khomeyni's replies to journalists' questions. During that time, we agreed with him that political rule in Iran had to be based on four basic principles—*independence, freedom, economic progress, and Islam* as the basic foundation for all of that. However, after Khomeyni returned to Iran and settled there, he changed the content of his political rhetoric and tone, and a difference with him arose. What remains today of these declared principles, which are legitimate global principles that Iranians aspire to realize? Practically speaking, almost nothing.

[AL-MAJALLAH] In reviewing the results of the Iranian revolution 14 years after it began, how could one summarize the current political and economic situation in Iran?

[Bani-Sadr] The major feature characterizing the current economic and political situation in Iran is virtual failure in many fields. Economic progress has not been achieved. The Iranian economy is entirely linked to abroad. Foreign debts total \$40 billion, of which \$30 billion are short-term debts that must be repaid in a short time. Iran has \$5 billion in delinquent debts. The creditor countries—Japan, Germany, France, and Italy—have been compelled to call for the immediate repayment of Iran's debts to them. Oil, the country's main resource, is sold at a loss, because its price is calculated in rials priced 20 times lower than the real price per dollar. Politically, Iran has become isolated domestically and abroad. It is isolated domestically, because the regime has lost the foundations on which it was established, namely popular legitimacy, national legitimacy, vanguard-progressive legitimacy, and even religious legitimacy owing to the differences that now

exist between several religious currents. Abroad, Iran now appears to be more diplomatically isolated than it was just prior to the revolution. The regime in Iran is also unable to achieve a national reconciliation between different groups of Iranians, and between itself and hundreds of thousands of emigres in Europe and America. True, the return of several thousand skilled Iranian emigres has been recorded. However, that number is considered small compared to the 300,000 skilled Iranians who have emigrated. The Iranian regime is now seeking to emerge from its isolation by continuing the media war against the United States while simultaneously attempting to achieve a rapprochement with it secretly.

[AL-MAJALLAH] There are rumors here and there that the United States intends to lift the economic restrictions imposed on doing business with Iran, and that Iran intends to take advantage of the political change in the United States to begin a new chapter. Is a U.S.-Iranian rapprochement in the offing?

[Bani-Sadr] The Iranian regime, despite its outward resoluteness and the sharp tone of its political and ideological rhetoric directed against America, is currently not breaking off its channels of contact with the Americans. In turn, the United States has not lost hope of achieving at least a limited, mutual understanding with Iran after the revolution. There have been secret contacts between Iran and America from the first day of Ronald Reagan's administration to the last day of George Bush's administration. In his recently published memoirs, former U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz disclosed how President Reagan supported all measures taken by the American side to maintain secret channels of direct and indirect communication with Iran, because America has vital strategic interests in Tehran. However, the fact that secret relations and hidden contacts have always existed between the two parties does not mean that a full rapprochement is possible. Both parties are seriously seeking it, but it seems almost impossible to achieve at present, not because good intentions and common interests are lacking, but also because the political collisions, sharp confrontations, and mutual challenges between the two parties are currently making it difficult for them to achieve a rapprochement. Since 1979, the Americans have based their Middle East policy on countering and containing Iran's regional influence, isolating Iran internationally, tightening the economic blockade of it, and waging a media and diplomatic war against it in international forums. How could the U.S. administration justify a decision on its part to renounce all of these [policy] foundations to achieve a rapprochement with Iran overnight? From the Iranian perspective, the situation seems more complex, because no Iranian official is willing to bear responsibility for a reaching a truce and achieving a rapprochement with America. Moreover, the regime in Iran derives its political and popular legitimacy to a large extent from its treatment of America as an enemy and its waging of a media and political war against it. As for a rapprochement between

Iran and the other major Western countries, such as France, Britain, Germany, and Japan, it occurred a long time ago, but Iran does not know how to exploit it to its advantage.

[AL-MAJALLAH] There has been growing talk of a struggle between the winds and currents in Iran. Does this struggle actually exist or is it just imagined?

[Bani-Sadr] There is no sound basis to talk of struggles between moderates and extremists, between supporters and antagonists of the West, and between realists and idealists. It amounts to rumors, which have been circulated for some time by the United States, Britain, and Israel to serve their own purposes. If a struggle and competition exist in Iran, it is for power. In Iran, when it is futile to struggle, rivals prefer to divide the spoils in expectation of an opportunity to strike or trick one another. This is what is happening now.

Alleged Iranian Terrorist Network in France

93AS0685A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
17 Mar 93 pp 31-34

[Article by Dr. 'Ali Nuri Zadah: "True Nature of Iranian Terrorist Network in France; Cooperation of Khomeyni's Nephew With French Police Exposes Network's Secrets"]

[Text] When Jean Bruguiere, a well-known French magistrate and investigator, announced in wake of the assassination of Shahpur Bakhtiar, a former Iranian prime minister and leader of the National Resistance Front, which opposed the ayatollahs' regime, that he will have no mercy on those who killed his friend Bakhtiar and on those who have any close or remote connection with this crime, his statement was received with ridicule by some sources close to the Iranian Government.

Hamid Reza Naqqashan, an official of the Revolutionary Guard Intelligence Department, is reported to have said at the time that the "strugglers" who executed the death sentence against Bakhtiar and Saroush Kati-beh, his secretary, were "fish" and that Bruguiere does not know how to fish.

When special security forces in Paris raided the Iranian Radio and Television Bureau in France two weeks ago on the order of Judge Bruguiere to look for information on the Iranian terrorist network in Europe—a network whose members have, in the past three years, carried out death sentences against 14 Iranian opposition leaders and cultural figures abroad, including Bakhtiar and his secretary and, earlier, Dr. Abdolrahman Borumand, Bakhtiar's deputy; Dr. Abdolrahman Qasemlo, leader of the Kurdish Democratic Party; Dr. Kazim Rajavi, Masoud Rajavi's brother; Dr. Cyrus Elahi, leader of the royalist Darafsh-e Kavian Organization; Fereydon Farokhzad, a well-known artist, poet, and singer; and, finally, Dr. Sadeq Sharafkandi, Qasemlo's successor, and four of his aides and supporters—on that day,

Naqqashan began to be aware of his erroneous assessment of the French magistrate's character and of the extent of his determination to destroy the Iranian terrorist network and to arrest its members.

Bakhtiar's son, who works as an inspector in the French security agency, was extremely surprised when he talked to Ali Vakili Rad, one of Bakhtiar's assassins who had been arrested by the Swiss authorities and then turned over to France a few weeks after the operation.

There is no doubt that Vakili Rad, who entered Bakhtiar's home in the company of Mohammad Azadi (deputy chief of the Revolutionary Guard Intelligence Department) and Fereydon Boyer Ahmadi, a member of Bakhtiar's movement who Bakhtiar treated like a son and who led the assassins and helped them slaughter the Iranian resistance leader and his secretary—there is no doubt that Rad exposed the link between Hosein Sheikh Attar, the adviser to Telegraph and Telephone Minister Mohammad Gharazi and the brother of Iranian Ambassador to India Ali Reza Attar. He also acquainted Bruguiere with the role played by the Iranian Radio and Television Bureau in Paris in securing French entry visas for Bakhtiar's assassins and in facilitating their departure from France to Switzerland.

Press Cover

AL-MAJALLAH sources in the Iranian capital report that Bruguiere dispatched a close associate of his to Iran a few weeks after Vakili Rad's arrest under a press cover to work in a well-known French-language magazine. This individual's mission was to establish contact with Masoud Hendizadeh, Khomeyni's nephew and a former director of the Iranian Radio and Television Bureau in Paris. It is worth noting that the French authorities had expelled Hendizadeh in the wake of the 1986 explosions in Paris. However, some sources believe that Hendizadeh was expelled for his own safety because the Iranian intelligence had begun to doubt the credibility of his reports. Mosavi Nejad, an intelligence official at the time (and currently general director of the Ministry of Intelligence), submitted a report to Khomeyni himself on the possibility of Hendizadeh's cooperation with French intelligence. During his presence in Tehran, Hendizadeh worked as an adviser to the Europe Desk officer at the Ministry of Intelligence. But he maintained his contacts with the guard intelligence agency or the Savama, i.e., the Presidential Intelligence Bureau.

Bruguiere's envoy told Hendizadeh that he had better depart Iran as quickly as possible because it was likely he was going to be arrested by the security authorities in Tehran.

According to AL-MAJALLAH sources, Hendizadeh was able, through his friendship with Mohammad Gharazi and with the help of his cousin Ahmad Khomeyni, to renew his passport and the passports of his wife and his five children. He then went to the French Embassy in Tehran, where a special visa was awaiting him. Two days

later, Hendizadeh, accompanied by his wife and children, went to Mehrabad Airport and boarded an Iranian flight heading for Paris, where Bruguere and his men were waiting for him.

Safe Place

After his family had been taken to a safe place, Hendizadeh accompanied Judge Bruguere to a special detention site, where the Iranian official enjoys all means of comfort, to protect his life.

French sources note that Hendizadeh's safety costs France a large sum, considering that a special unit of security and police officers guard him at an unidentified place north of Paris. In the past two years, European and some Middle Eastern security agencies have been able to uncover several terrorist networks and to arrest their members, thanks to the information supplied by Hendizadeh when he was interrogated. Hendizadeh also contributed to exposing the role of Zia' Sarhaddi, an Iranian diplomat arrested in France and scheduled to be handed over to the Swiss authorities on the charge of assassinating Dr. Kazim Rajavi, the brother of Masoud Rajavi, the Mojahedin-e-Khalq Organization chairman.

These sources link Hendizadeh's cooperation with the French security authorities to the arrest in France five months ago of two Iranians carrying diplomatic passports. The sources report that Hendizadeh brought with him to France files, documents, and photographs of officials in charge of terrorist activities abroad.

AL-MAJALLAH has learned that the two arrested Iranians are Mahmoud Sajjadian (a former Revolutionary Guard intelligence officer who operated under the cover of a second secretary of Iranian embassies abroad) and Ali Kamali Damavandi, also known as "Brainless Ali," from the Revolutionary Guard's special execution squad whose men have taken charge of executing regime opponents and shah's men.

French sources consider Sajjadian the mastermind of the assassinations of Qasemlo, Borumand Elahi, Bakhtiar, and Kazim Rajavi.

The sources note that Judge Bruguere has notified the higher authorities in Paris that any effort on the part of the government to release Sajjadian and his partner, Damavandi, through a deal with Tehran will compel him to come clean with the French people and to familiarize them with serious secrets concerning the explosions in Paris, Iran's role in them, and the laxity shown by the authorities vis-a-vis the perpetrators of these acts who were able to leave France after France received trade deals from Iran.

An Iranian source assisting Judge Bruguere in his investigations has disclosed that Bruguere has a list that includes the names of more than 30 Iranian officials and diplomats, headed by Vahid Korji, the Iranian Embassy interpreter in Paris who was wanted by the French authorities for interrogation on the issue of the Paris

explosions. Korji left France in 1987 when the blockade on the French Embassy in Tehran ended. The list includes other well-known names, such as Ahmad Kan'ani, the former Iranian charge d'affaires in Tunis and commander of the guard in Lebanon; Hosein Sheikh Attar, Gharazi's adviser; Rasoul Qassab Qara'i, a former Iranian consul in Germany; Hajj Reza Askari, a former commander of the guard in Lebanon; and Ali Akbar Mohtashami, a former interior minister.

AL-MAJALLAH has learned that Bruguere's current investigations include questioning detained Iranian diplomats Sajjadian, Damavandi, and Zia' Sarhaddi in the presence of Hendizadeh so as to complete the investigation dossier and bring these people to trial.

Serious Information

The sources report that Bruguere has heard serious information from the detainees about the Iranian intelligence agencies' activities in the world and that he made his decision to inspect the Iranian Radio and Television Bureau in Paris and to interrogate Hasan Haji Baravan, the bureau chief, and the bureau personnel after Sajjadian, one of the detainees, admitted that this bureau is used by the Iranian intelligence as a front and that it was likely that the bureau would contain documents and files including information on the assassinations of Bakhtiar, Kazim Rajavi, and Cyrus Elahi.

It is premature to evaluate the information Bruguere obtained through his examination of the books and files of the Iranian Radio and Television Bureau in Paris at the end of last February. However, French sources believe that Bruguere's two-week retreat with Hendizadeh to review the files and books taken by the French security units from the bureau is perhaps his last retreat and that after this retreat, Bruguere will disclose the true nature of the Iranian networks in Europe and whether these networks are directly tied to President Rafsanjani's administration or whether they are directed and instructed by the centers of power in Iran.

Lifting Ban on Videos, Evolution of Issue Discussed

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[Article by Fahmi Huwaydi]

[Text] The Iranians' celebration of the Iranian new year, which begins in March, differs in its flavor from any other celebration held during the year. However, this year, it is acquiring special importance, because the government has promised to lift the ban on videos on this happy occasion!

The Tehran press reports that Guidance Minister Ali Larijani said on 18 November that his ministry is studying the repeal of a decision to ban the distribution of videocassette players at the beginning of the Iranian new year this month. In his statement, he said that

official permission to distribute videos will accompany the repeal to encourage the private sector to produce video films, which will stimulate artistic and cultural activity in the country.

With this statement, which generated a major uproar among various circles in Qom and Tehran, the guidance minister ended part of a debate, which has been growing in Iran since mid-1992, over whether to permit video and how to respond to the cultural invasion making inroads into the country from every direction.

Those who follow Iranian rhetoric in the context of the Islamic revolution realize that the guidance minister's remarks reflect an interesting, positive development—unimaginable in the early eighties—which indicates a considerably different way of thinking in the nineties compared to the eighties.

When the Islamic revolution began, "art" was black-listed for the same reason that led to tension in the relation between jurisprudence and art, namely the word's linkage to decadence, as depicted in the art of the second Abbaside period and as developed under royal rule, which did not hesitate to organize festivals featuring shameless films, and filled television programming with Western series that ripped apart society's traditions. That was the reason behind the religious ruling issued by Imam Khomeyni before the revolution. The ruling mentioned "liberation of the medium" in connection with "radio, television, and the like," stating, "Because the use of these prohibited devices is widespread among the majority, they may be sold and purchased only by those who can be trusted to use them for what is permitted and not for what is prohibited."

When the revolution began, the public expressed rage at anything related to art, viewing it as a source of corruption and decadence that violated taboos and led to the westernization of society. I experienced this period, when enraged Iranian youths attacked the role of cinema and theater. Possession of a television during this period was undesirable, especially given Imam Khomeyni's legal ruling in this regard, which was known to all. "He was not alone in urging that television be boycotted, and that its introduction into the home be prohibited. Many Islamic law experts shared this position at the time."

While conservative families considered television reprehensible and unacceptable, others who possessed television sets felt hard pressed, especially in a holy city like Qom. Therefore, the majority of people having no connection with the world of religious learning would conceal their television antennas at daybreak and remount them at nightfall!

Imam Khomeyni changed his position after the revolution because the new Islamic regime could employ television in its service. He assumed that television was permitted and beneficial. However, the model that he presented was initially unattractive for understandable reasons.

Video and the Television Crisis

While television programming improved relatively with time, it still failed to attract viewers and satisfy popular desires. Video thus gained extreme importance in Iranian society, because it represented the best option for people to see what they wanted or craved.

Another option, the erection of large antennas able to receive television transmissions from different parts of the world, proved enormously costly, and attracted the attention of the youths of the committees who follow these matters, perhaps causing their owners difficulties. Video, by contrast, is free of such difficulties.

However, some Islamic law experts, who grudgingly remained quiet on the television issue and accepted its permissibility and use by the Islamic revolution government, believed that videos were a source of evil and corruption that could not be remedied by the Islamic government, simply because the government could not control what the people purchased or distributed. In other words, the guidance role exercised with respect to television could not be exercised regarding video.

After it became known that the markets were being surreptitiously flooded with sexual or debased video films smuggled into the country, it was decided to prohibit the sale and distribution of videocassette players in the mid-eighties. The situation changed, however, in the early nineties. The Iraqi-Iranian war had ended, entry/exit restrictions were eased, and the government pursued an economic policy that was more open to the outside world. As Iranians became more interested in consuming and in living, which usually happens after a war, video smuggling escalated, as did the smuggling of other forbidden items, with which smuggling networks managed to flood country. These smuggling activities were carried out on a large scale between the Iranian coast and the Gulf states.

Video very quickly imposed itself on Iranian life. As declared in the Consultative Council, there are more than 3 million videocassette players in the country. Videocassette commerce has developed to service these players and assume a market position. It was impossible to repel this wave with a mere legal ban, which proved its ineffectiveness in dealing with the phenomenon. Video thus became a part, albeit illegal, of reality, which has provoked a major debate at different levels between those who fear it and caution against its corrupting influences, and those who favor dealing with it and permitting it to everyone. Groups of enthusiastic youths have rushed to register their opposition to permitting video. Slogans have appeared on the Tehran's walls saying, for example: The use of video brings abomination into homes, video is more dangerous than the atom bomb, beware of Western corruption lying in wait in video, etc.

However, the loudest voice continued to be that that argued in favor of dealing with the problem and not ignoring it or merely including video in the list of

prohibitions. Many articles appeared in newspapers promoting the slogan "fight video with video" and calling for the production of more films able to compete with, and divert people away from, the corrupting films that are infiltrating into the markets.

State Recognition

It was clear that the government supported the trend toward permitting video. President Hashemi Rafsanjani is quoted as saying last October: This device cannot be denied to the people. He added that if we do not fill the free time of our youths, the satellites will do it for us.

In the same month, Guidance Minister Ali Larijani said that it was unreasonable at present to prevent the entry of videocassette players and video films. He added that these prohibitions were imposed due to an incorrect understanding of the country's needs and the prevailing global circumstances.

He went on to say: Video is a technological phenomenon, which we cannot disregard. We must acknowledge that we erred in promulgating a law banning it, which resulted in its surreptitious distribution, and made society more desirous of purchasing videocassette devices. Had it been decided at the outset to permit video, it would not have enjoyed this degree of interest.

These remarks were greatly welcomed by advocates of permitting video, chief among which is the weekly *AL-SINIMA* [CINEMA], which did so conspicuously in its 14 October 1992 issue, in which it called on the government to adopt the guidance minister's statement in his capacity as the leading official in charge of these activities. It also called for the implementation of the "video club" plan, i.e., clubs that present video films in public places to occupy youths' free time and thus prevent this important, active sector of society from filling its free time with its own means, which are not devoid of adventure. From this angle, video solves a problem removed from official guidance.

The issue has become a main topic of broad discussions. Last January, I published an interview with Ms. Zahra' (Rahfood), a litterateur, artist, and the wife of former Prime Minister Hosein Mir Musavi. In the interview, she said that the media revolution is posing a new challenge to countries wishing to maintain their identities. There are currently 129 satellites in the skies of Iran through which different television programs can be transmitted from throughout the world. Serious consideration must be given to a method for dealing with this reality. Therefore, it is important to study the effect of satellites and video on the people and on the government's policies.

She added that the "destructive" role of these media should not be feared if the people believe in the country's domestic policies. She stressed that the policy strategy of

pursuing insulation from these dangers is mistaken, and that resistance to penetration attempts can be truly guaranteed by providing for social justice and freedom to express opinions and ideas.

Before that, ABRAR published an interview on this subject with Mr. (Qashfawi), a member of the Consultative Council representing the (Shahreyar) area near the Iranian capital, in which he said that the problem is greater than video and satellites. It consists primarily of an attack by Western culture, which is threatening the special character and structure of Third World countries in particular. He called for confronting this attack with a strategy comprising two parts, one passive or deterrent and the other active.

Regarding the first part of the strategy, he called for combating the general poverty pervading Iranian society. Regarding the active part of the strategy, he said that it is extremely important in confronting this invasion to focus on: spreading the message and Islamic call among the masses to deepen their awareness of their religion's teachings and to fortify them culturally; and increasing the budget allocated for sponsoring missionary, cultural, and artistic activities, and for encouraging commissioned arts and artists.

Ms. Zahra' Mostafavi, Imam Khomeyni's daughter and the chairwoman of the Iranian Women's Association, in an interview published in ABRAR, said, "The spread of freedoms, the achievement of social justice, and the unleashing of the people's creative abilities in art, literature, and culture in general, with deference to the numerous tastes of different social groups, will—in addition to obtaining the public's approval on the political, economic, and cultural levels—minimize the destructive effects of such tools of the Western cultural invasion as satellites and video."

Ms. Zahra' Mostafavi said that there are three strategies for confronting this attack: prohibition, permission, or guidance. She tends to favor guidance and calls on the state to assume responsibility for "supervising, planning, encouraging, and enriching cultural and artistic activities, and diversifying cultural and artistic production centers."

The debates continue. Though they focus outwardly on video, satellites, and the importation of foreign books, the essence of the debates concerns how to formulate the Islamic republic's relation with the outside world following the universal realization that no society can continue to live in isolation from what is around it, and that the penetration of predominant cultures is a key feature of the present and future.

This realization is important in and of itself, even if it is coming relatively late. However, more important is the positive, correct formulation of the Islamic republic's relation with the outside world. Perhaps the decision to repeal the video ban is a step in the right direction.

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